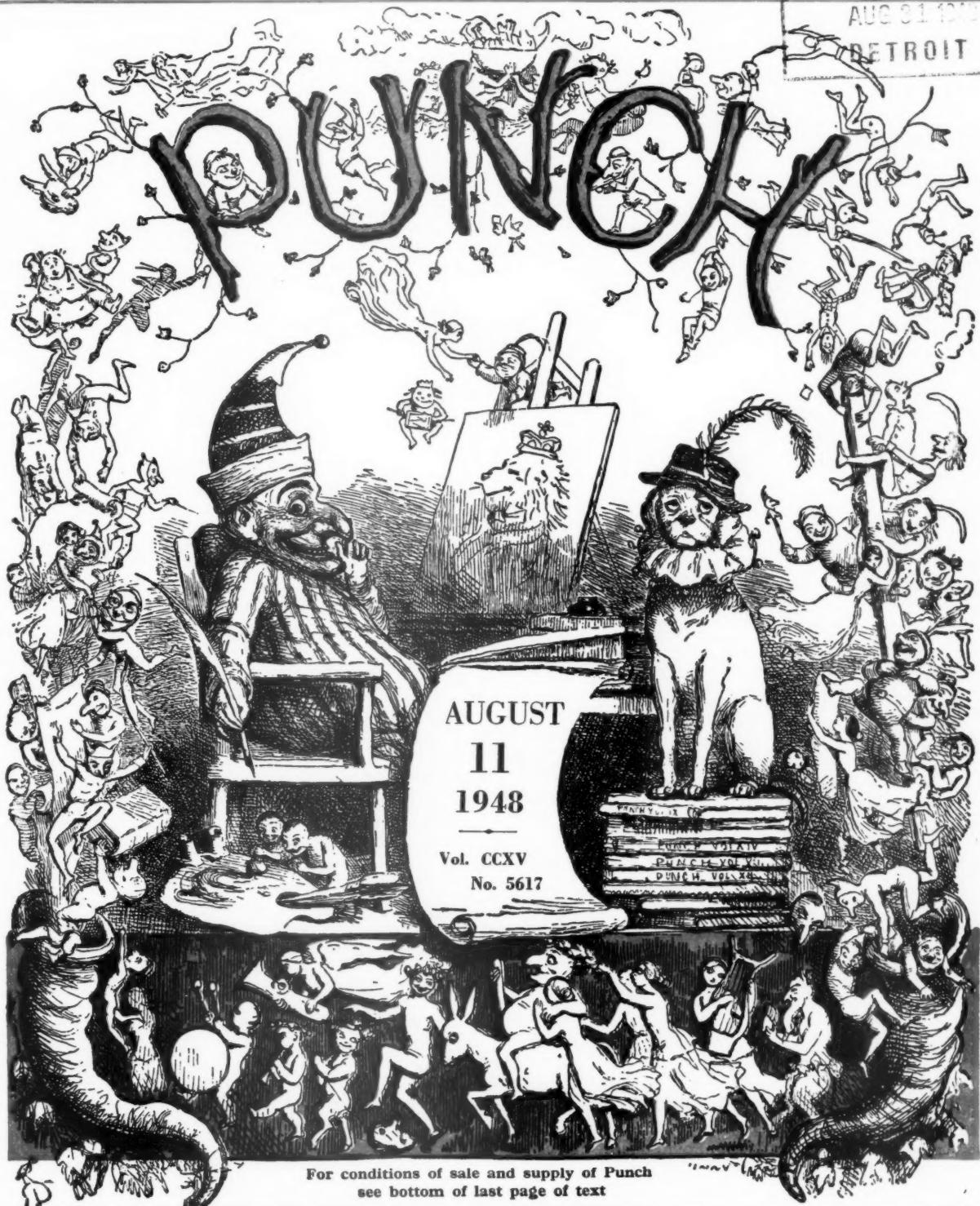


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P.698A

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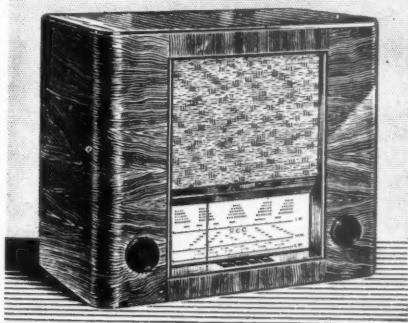
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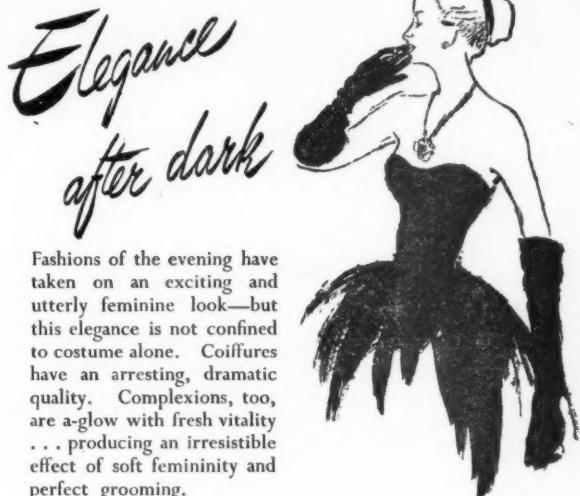
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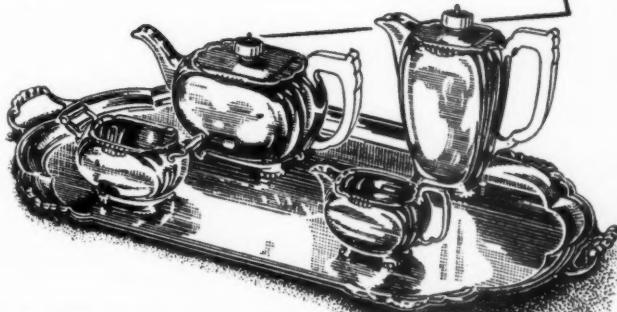
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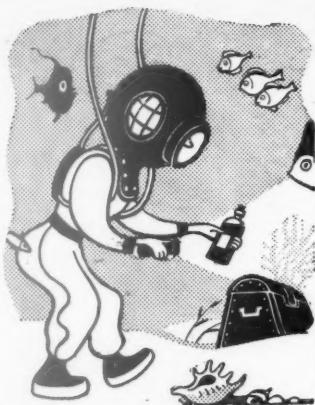
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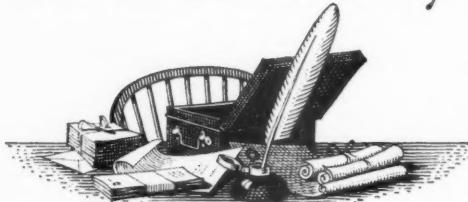
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MEN'S SEMI BROGUE, with an unusual quarter line. This WAUKEEZL style is welted, and combines very strong wearing qualities with distinctive design.

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THIS DARK AND MELLOW RUM distilled by the traditional pot still, long matured in oak, and bottled in Jamaica, makes a grand drink mixed this way:

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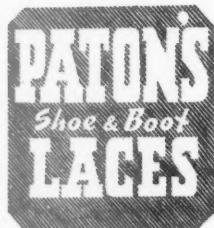
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Punch, August 11 1948



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MERIENDA, pale dry,
FINO, light pale dry,
GOLDEN,
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at the controlled price of 20/- per bottle. Cases will be charged and allowed for when returned. Unfortunately Bristol Milk and Bristol Cream will not be available until the import restrictions are entirely withdrawn.

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Shirt Manufacturers for over 100 years

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I specialise in replacing bristles in worn brushes. Forward your Ivory, Silver or Ebony brushes, when quotation will be sent by return of post.

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a full lifetime of letters
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BALKAN SOBRANIE
CIGARETTES & TOBACCO

No. 15

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ENGLAND . . .

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In many a village rectory, hall and inn there are discerning folk who have discovered the virtues of Balkan Sobranie and who wisely never change. The economy of long smoking and the pleasure of an aroma that even the ladies appreciate, these are the virtues they value . . .



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Yeast releases energy from other foods! Three tablets of Yestamin Daily Yeast with every meal helps you to positive health. Yestamin Daily Yeast, a splendid combination of proteins and the B Vitamins, does not contain drugs



AT YOUR CHEMIST
100 TABLETS 1/6 • 300 TABLETS 4/-

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**LEMON
HART
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A Summer Drink

A measure of
LEMON HART,
with Ginger Ale,
or Cyder, or
Fruit Squash
and Soda
Stir well with ice.



THE THUNDER of a falling feather...

A FEATHER floats to the ground slowly and, apparently, in silence. But, in actual fact, its fall produces a sound capable of immense amplification. Even a small Philips Amplifier develops power at least 10 million million times greater than that produced by the original sound.



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CENTURY HOUSE · SHAFTESBURY AVENUE · LONDON · W.C.2 (P.377K)

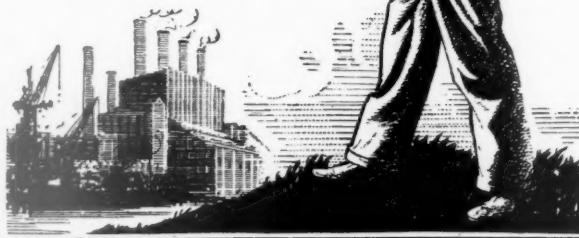
FORD ENTERPRISE FOR BRITISH PROSPERITY

Local boy makes good

The Ford Trade School takes promising local boys and makes first-class engineers of them. While in training, they get free meals and good wages. When they qualify they can either join Ford's staff or go elsewhere. Their Ford training ensures that they will uphold the traditions of British engineering.

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**FIRST AID
Summer
FOR EYE TROUBLES**



HOLIDAY EYE TROUBLES. The Change of Air — too much Breeze and Sun — after Bathing — for a Summer Head Cold. OPTREX is indispensable in all cases.

EYE FATIGUE. In cases of eye fatigue caused by overwork — by glaring or insufficient light — by irritation, dust or fumes, OPTREX brings immediate relief at each application.

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Optrex *the*
EYE LOTION



For custard "just like Mother's make,"
it's **MONK & GLASS** and no mistake



PUNCH

OR
THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCXV No. 5617

August 11 1948

Charivaria

THE maximum retail price of rice has been fixed by the Food Ministry at 9d. a pound. Should any rice become available the price will of course be subject to alteration.

"How can the Cabinet Ministers of to-day hold up their heads when they remember their famous predecessors of the Victorian Age?" asks a writer. In those days of course the Gladstone collar was a considerable help.

Old War Put in its Place

"Dr. Malan does not smoke or drink. He will be the first South African Premier to have an entirely Afrikaans-speaking Cabinet. He is also the first Premier who did not take an active part in the Boer War. He has never taken an active part in any form of sport."—*"Madras Mail."*



Many great scientists have received quite inadequate financial reward. Sir Isaac Newton's windfall was altogether exceptional.

We are told that playing a wind instrument increases the size of the mouth. The mouth of the player, that is, not of the trombone.

By Jove!

"Hundred-and-fifty-mile-wide thunder bolt passed over Manchester moving North."—*Local paper.*

R.A.F. officers, asked what Gatow airport is like, describe it as a piece of cake.

"Young lady seeks post as Chauffeuse. Some knowledge of hospital nursing."—*Advt. in Exeter "Express and Echo."*

Good. Ever done any driving?

It is said that with the decline of horse-riding there are not so many bow-legged people. Have we no 'cellists left either?

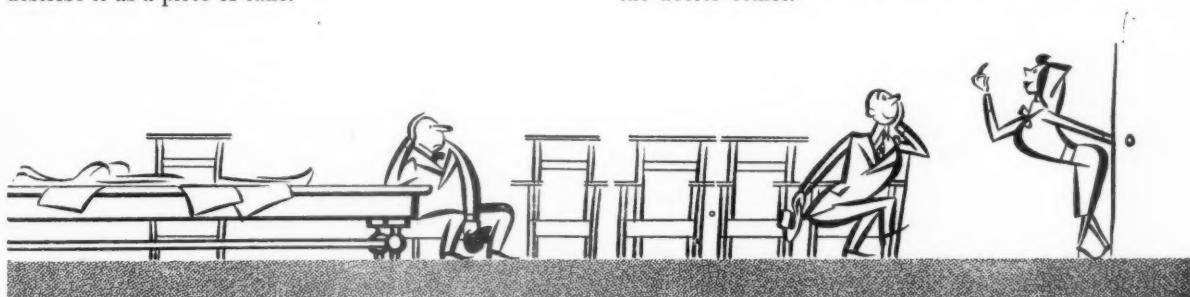


The organizer of a newspaper quiz asks who was the world's first sailor. And he won't take Noah for an answer.

"The secret service man arrived some days ago in Singapore on a Chinese boat, the Hai Lee, from Rangoon, and after presenting his credentials went underground."—*"Singapore Sunday Times."*

The colour of his false moustache is being kept secret at present.

A correspondent in a picture paper says that while sitting in a doctor's waiting-room he fell in love with the receptionist. Thus solving the problem of what to do till the doctor comes.



Ruritania's Only Win

O F all the names that have chimed like bells on our wireless sets these last two weeks—the Zatopeks and the Ljunggrens, the Blankers-Koens and the Consolinos—none stands higher than that of Captain W. O. G. Grut, winner of the Modern Pentathlon. Even the formidable four from Turkey, the mighty wrestlers Akar and Bilge, Atik and Dogu, who caused their country's national anthem to crash out four times running (in itself, I believe, an Olympic Record) cannot divert my attention for an instant from this astonishing Swedish soldier.

To enter for the Pentathlon a man must be proficient, to put it no higher, at riding a 5,000-metre steeplechase, fencing, shooting with a pistol, swimming 300 metres and running 4,000 metres across country. To win, it is hardly necessary to add, he must be, on balance, more proficient at all these things than any of his competitors; and the measure of Captain Grut's achievement is that, on a system of one point for a win, two for a second place and so on in each of the five events, he emerged with 16 points against the next man's 47. At riding and swimming there was no one to touch him, with the épée he was equal first, at shooting he was fifth, and in the cross-country run he came in eighth.

One gets the impression, reviewing the Captain's attainments, that he would be a useful man to have with one in a tight corner. If I were unlucky enough to be beset in a castle at any time by armed desperadoes I should pick out Captain Grut without hesitation as the man to send off for help. "Grut," I should say, "I depend on you!" and I should clap him on the shoulder with a valedictory "Good luck!" at the same time indicating a secret way out of the castle. He would then swim the moat with contemptuous ease, pistol his way through the beleaguering lines,

shooting with deadly effect (not perhaps with quite the accuracy of 2/Lt. B. Riem, of Switzerland, and two or three others I could mention, but well enough) until his ammunition gave out, and after dispatching with some well-timed thrusts in tierce one or two hulking fellows ill-advised enough to try to bar his progress, would leap on a handy horse and ride till the gallant beast dropped dead beneath him. There would then be nothing for it but to cover the last 4,000 metres to the police station on foot, which he would do in 15 minutes 28·9 seconds.

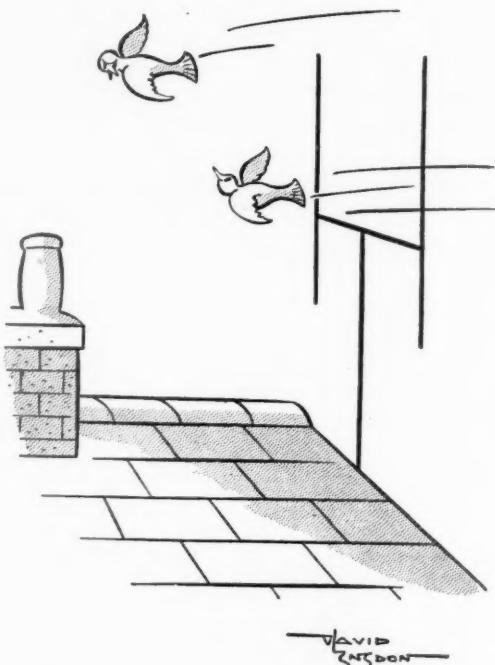
What, in fact, compels admiration about the Pentathlon is that it calls for qualities and accomplishments normally to be found only in the heroes of adventurous romance. If I were asked to produce a champion to pit against Captain Grut I should go, not to the Army as the Olympic selectors do, but to Number 305 Park Lane, W., to see whether Rudolf Rassendyll was at home.

A match between these two would be worth going a long way to see. Comparison, on the available evidence, is not always easy, but an examination of the records of the two men makes it clear enough that the result would be extremely close. The fencing, in my opinion, would go to Rassendyll. Of six recorded bouts in *The Prisoner of Zenda* he won five conclusively, and the sixth (unfinished) by a hit to nothing—and that, too, against a man on horseback. Not all these wins were entirely satisfactory. In the fight outside the hunting lodge, for instance, Rassendyll drove his sword so deep into "a big man's breast" that he was unable to withdraw it, a fault for which under modern rules he might well have been disqualified. De Gautet he defeated on the bridge at Zenda by striking before his opponent was ready. Bersonin, on Rudolf's own admission, was "no swordsman," and Detchard was a point up, with a palpable hit on Rassendyll's left arm, when he "trod in the pool of blood that flowed from the dead physician" and had the misfortune to slip and fall. "Like a dart," says Rassendyll in his own account of the affair, "I was upon him. I caught him by the throat and before he could recover himself I drove my point through his neck." None of Captain Grut's twenty-eight wins ended, so far as we know, in so fortuitous a fashion.

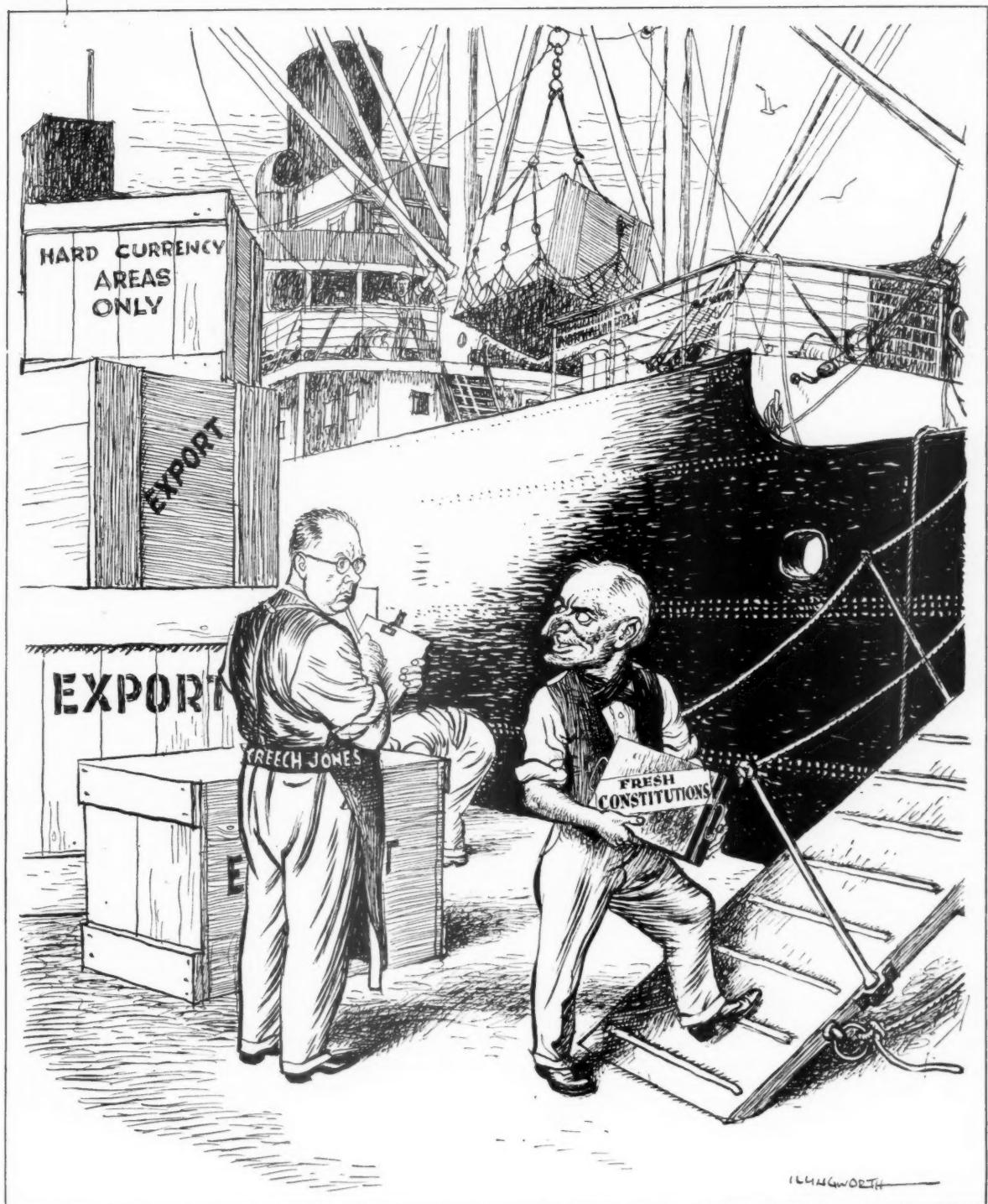
But of course it is not on these trivial preliminaries that Rassendyll's reputation as a swordsman rests. He was but twenty-nine at the time, "a strong but not a fine swordsman," as he says. Three years later, when he fought Rupert of Hentzau in the attic, constant practice with the foils had brought him to the summit of his powers. He needed no adventitious pools of blood now to help him get the better even of so fine an exponent as Rupert—and Rupert in his time had fought five or six men simultaneously, and "lunged at them," what is more, "with incomparable dash and dexterity." Rassendyll's eye, we are told, "was in perfect familiarity with its work, and his hand obeyed it as readily as the bolt slips in a well-oiled groove." His defence was "a barrier of iron impregnable in rest." Can Captain Grut's supporters claim as much?

Rudolf's record with the pistol is less impressive. I find only three occasions on which he discharged his firearm. He fired into the lock of a door, and hit it. He took a "snap shot" at Detchard in a dark garden in Strelau and winged him. And he fired full at the despicable Bauer at a range of about one yard and only grazed his temple. Despite Rassendyll's description of himself as "a good shot," I give the pistol-shooting event without hesitation to Captain Grut.

The swimming must also go to the Captain, though by



"All right, all right—never mind the Olympic stuff."



POOR POLICY

"And is *this* all you've got for the Colonies?"



"You've really got to speak to Rodney, dear. He's sublet the nursery again."

a narrower margin. Rassendyll was a strong swimmer, but too inclined to cumber himself up with gear of one kind or another to have much chance against a man capable of doing 300 metres in 4 minutes 17 seconds. The first time he entered the moat at Zenda he was fully dressed but for his boots, and carried a cudgel in his teeth. On the next occasion he wore a warm, tight-fitting woollen jersey, a pair of knickerbockers, thick stockings and light canvas shoes. He also carried a sword, a large flask of whisky and (hopeless handicap) pushed a ladder in front of him as he swam. Three years later he had learned a little wisdom and crossed the moat in his drawers and socks, but still insisted on taking his clothes with him (a brown tweed suit, if you please) in a bundle. I don't underestimate Rudolf's powers of endurance in the water, but in my opinion his mania for accessories would have handicapped him out of any race.

"I could ride anything," Rudolf claims, "that had a back to sit on." Good enough. To support the boast we have evidence that he rode forty miles from Strelsau to the hunting lodge one evening, killed a couple of men there and was back in the capital before nine the following morning. Detailed timings over the whole route are lacking, but we do know that the first twenty-five miles were covered in three hours, less half an hour "for a draught of wine and to bait the horses." How does this compare with Captain Grut's 5,000 metres in 9 minutes 18·2 seconds?

I don't know. The conditions are too dissimilar. But I do know that Rassendyll had had an extremely tiring day immediately before his ride, what with his Coronation and everything, whereas Captain Grut probably started quite fresh. On the evidence we are justified, I think, in proclaiming Rudolf the better horseman.

This makes it two events all, with the 4,000 metres cross-country as the decider. It is all the more annoying to find so little information about Rassendyll's form as a runner. For his only recorded foot-race, held in the Forest of Zenda at the odd time of 3 A.M., Rassendyll's preparation was in the highest degree unwise. He had spent the greater part of the night in the Castle moat, swimming about fully loaded as usual, had killed three men, been wounded in the left arm, the shoulder of which was still aching from an earlier dagger-wound, and, on his own admission, was "faint, spent and weary." Yet he tried to give thirty yards to so vigorous a runner as Rupert, who had limited his own limbering-up exercises to three quick swims in the moat and the killing of Black Michael. He could not do it, of course. Rupert rapidly increased his lead to a hundred yards, "his curls waving in the fresh breeze," and Rudolf was forced to pause for breath. Like Zatopek, he had taken too much out of himself in the earlier events.

Even so, it is worth noting that Rudolf ran second. Captain Grut, it will be remembered, was eighth. H. F. E.

Queue for Me, Gipsy.

AT Liverpool Street Station, the home of true democracy, where their motto is 'First come, get in the crowd with everybody else,' said Cogbottle with a touch of bitterness—

"Your judgment is warped," protested Upfoot, "by the holiday season."

"My judgment is warped by nothing more than the design of so many of the platforms at Liverpool Street," said Cogbottle, "which encourages ticket-collectors to save themselves trouble by letting through an enormous queue without waiting for the train to come in first. The mechanics, the ballistics of the queue—what did you say?"

"I made a slight sound," said Upfoot, "indicative of concentration."

"Good. As I see it, a queue without the actual presence of the object for which it is queueing is a blank, a meaningless dead phenomenon. It is the object's presence that gives it significance, that fires it, that strikes it, that sets it off. In other words, a train queue is not a—a fulfilled queue until the train is there, and any ticket-inspector who lets it through beforehand to gather in clots all along the edge of the platform is guilty of backfiring his gun, of short-circuiting his battery, of deliberately letting the air out of his tyres. But that isn't what I wanted to talk about."

Upfoot looked resigned.

"I wanted to discuss a question," said Cogbottle, "that came into my head while I was in one of those abortive, frustrated and unnecessary queues. It concerns what may be called immediacy of reaction."

Upfoot said "Never mind what it may be called—what is it?"

"I am thinking of the strange people who are, to judge from the crowds at railway-stations," said Cogbottle, "prompted by unexpectedly good weather to go away for their holidays."

Upfoot stared. "What's wrong with that? Do you mean strange-looking people?"

"On the contrary. I mean perfectly ordinary people. The strange thing about them is their immediacy of reaction, or alternatively their positively arachnidean prescience—by which phrase I mean to refer to—"

"I know," said Upfoot. "You mean those spiders in Cornwall that foretold the heat-wave by beginning, in cold weather, to build webs to catch hot-weather flies."

"Exactly. Now when do you suppose people going away last week-end to a popular seaside resort had to book their rooms?" said Cogbottle.

"Say March. A bit before the papers reported that motor-coach seats were being booked for next Christmas."

"Very well—March. And yet, four months in advance," Cogbottle said, "they hit a week-end of perfect holiday weather when the stations were to be packed with unusually large crowds of others doing the same thing."

"Wait a minute, you haven't thought this out," said Upfoot, looking pleased. "One of the terms of your proposition is being used twice, or something. Either they're long-range weather-forecasters, in which case immediacy of reaction doesn't come into it—or they catch a train for the seaside when it's a fine day, and I must say I'm blowed if I see why they shouldn't. You can't have it both ways."

Cogbottle rubbed his brow reflectively, and at length declared "You're over-simplifying."

"The subject can stand a little of that," said Upfoot with some warmth.

"No," said Cogbottle, rubbing his brow again, "listen.

Consider the afternoon edition of a London evening paper on a fine Friday—or still more, a fine Saturday. What do you see on the front page?"

"The early afternoon edition? I see a huge headline," said Upfoot, "reading THOUSANDS DELAYED, and under it an enthralling story about how enormous numbers of City workers were late at their offices in the morning because, on a train between Mark Lane and Cannon Street, one of the doors got stuck."

Cogbottle waved a hand dismissively. "On Fridays and Saturdays they give that a rest and count the people at the *main-line* stations. Always, on a fine day, there are thousands more than usual. Station-masters have never known anything like it."

"But damn it all, of course there are more," said Upfoot. "A fine day—"

"All right—a fine day, in other words a spur-of-the-moment decision. What kind of character is it who can start his holiday and set out for a fortnight at the seaside, family, luggage, dog and all, on the spur of the moment? Gipsies aren't in it."

"Perhaps gipsies are in it," suggested Upfoot. "That would explain the whole thing. Every queue full of gipsies. Send Your Caravan By Rail. Babies under every seat, mountains of clothes-pegs in the van. Excuse me, madam, this is a First Class carriage—I must ask you to cross my palm with silver. That goat in the corridor has a lucky face. There's too much wind through the window, brother."

"I had hoped," said Cogbottle, "that we might discuss this problem seriously."

Upfoot said, "I preferred to short-circuit your queue." R. M.

○ ○

Waterloo Waltzes!

WATERLOO waltzes! "Away! Away!"
Cry the 'speakers high in the arches—
Oh, who cares a fig what his wife will say
When he lurches back to "The Larches"?

Waltz with me, girl in the sober serge!
Ask a friend to attend your wicket.
This is no foolish fleeting urge,
For I have a season ticket.

Waterloo waltzes! The strings entreat
One and all to stoop to folly
And even the tea tastes bitter-sweet
From the not very mobile trolley.

Waltz with me, keeper of Platform Nine!
Away with your cap and clapper!
I will provide a good white wine
If you will provide the slipper!

Waterloo waltzes! The solemn WRAC
Looses rich, red-captive tresses,
While shy little barmaids come trooping back
From interminable recesses.

Waltz with me, girl in the unseen tower,
Who chants our trains like a sonnet;
Mine goes at twenty past the hour
But I'm sure that I shan't be on it!

Is There a Docker in the House?

I AM redundant. They don't want me. I walk alone, propelled through hostile streets by the pointed elbows of my countrymen and chilled to the marrow by their cold shoulders. I am superfluous.

Until I read all about it I could only guess at the reason for my misfortune. Without best friends there is no one to tell you; but I knew well enough that the bonds of kinship which had sustained me for more than three decades were ruptured beyond repair. The flowers of my beloved country are not for me to pick.

It would be idle to suggest that the truth came as a shock. I had suppressed my dark suspicions for too long. Little incidents, trivial in themselves, had already pushed me to the very brink of despair. Repeatedly I was a victim of discrimination. In cafés and restaurants I noticed that other people always seemed to get larger helpings than mine, with more gravy. The waiter would fix me with one long look of disgust and pull a nasty dog-eared menu from his hip-pocket—a menu heavily scored with deletions and obviously reserved for black-listed customers. If I ordered a bottle of wine he would refuse to serve me himself and call up a lackey of lower caste to minister to my extravagance. And even when I left my most generous tip his glare of disapproval suggested that I was merely uncovering the coins bequeathed to him by the previous occupant of the table.

It was the same in the streets. Other people got their taxis with the slightest flip of a flaccid hand while I had to risk death to obtain service. Even then my cab would be old, suffocating and littered with crumbs and cigarette-ends. It is significant, surely, that I have never yet ridden in a taxi equipped with those canvas loop-things which lend such an air of cultured indolence to the passenger who handles them knowingly.

I got a raw deal everywhere; and I hate raw deals—they disagree with me. Without putting up notices to say so in so many words, the great London clubs barred me from their premises. With real cunning they kept their membership fees just high enough to be beyond my purse. Everywhere it was the same: *is the same*.

They* want me to emigrate. They want to get rid of twenty millions of us because they believe that the

remaining thirty millions would provide Britain with an optimum population. They don't want the emigrants to be drawn from one sex, class, trade, age-group or income-group: they want what they call "a representative cross-section," to include the highest intellects and the lowest. So they want me.

The fools! Swayed by thoughts of immediate gain (one and a half houses per family, an end to queueing, the return of the buyer's market, etc.) they would destroy Britain's greatness in a burst of Malthusian stupidity. While there is yet time let me warn them with as impressive a parade of cool logic as they will find anywhere outside the Churchill-Bevan exchanges.

Reduce the population of Britain to thirty million and what happens? I'll tell you. The newspapers, terribly shrunken in circulation, would have nothing to write about, no new records to announce. There would be no record crowds of holiday-makers at Waterloo, no record attendances at the Proms, at Lord's, Wembley . . . anywhere. Nothing to take our minds off things. Sport would decline. Few people would care to spend their afternoons in half-empty football grounds, cheering on teams representing cities half buried under the sands of time. Cricket . . . well, even with fifty millions to draw on we can't find a Test team to beat Australia: with a population of only

thirty millions we should do well to find eleven men bold enough to stand up to ball and commentator.

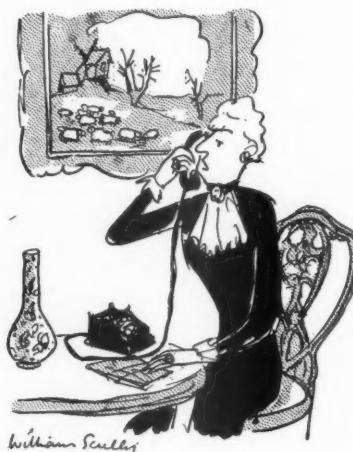
For lack of demand some of our industries would disappear. Others would become so weak and unprofitable that they'd hardly be worth nationalizing. The National Debt would press down upon those of us who were left to share it with frightful force. Thirty million of us would be working night and day to pay off the post-war credits of twenty million emigrants.

Schools and clubs would be half-empty. The M.C.C. would implore us to put its name down on our waiting-lists. The B.B.C.'s Third Programme and the Television Service would close down for want of support, and every Home and Light listener would be required to serve every month or so on the studio audience panel. More serious still, the balance of power between man and the animal kingdom would be destroyed. With fewer hands slapping at fewer necks the insect world would flourish and multiply. Wild ponies, rodents, marauding birds and pests of all kinds would simply get out of hand.

The fruits of the salvage drive would be so poor that Britain's rôle as workshop, arsenal and aircraft-carrier of democracy would be jeopardized. Without adequate supplies of waste paper and empty toothpaste tubes we should find ourselves absurdly short of cartridge-cases, planes, warships and tanks.

It would be ghastly . . .

I could go on to paint the picture in all its gruesome detail, but I have said enough. After all, you may be one of the lucky ones. Personally, though, I'd like to stay, see things through and get that new car I ordered back in 1945. I just happen to *know* that this "representative cross-section" they are talking about means me. I don't go about with my eyes shut. Hod.



* The chorus of silly asses writing in the *Daily* —.

"The boy's just brought the two pounds of fat you've wrangled for me, but what about the two ounces I'm entitled to?"

"Children stroke a full-grown seal which stayed in shallow water at Whitby (Yorks). The seal then came ashore, asked, and allowed people to get snapshots."

Daily paper.

Guttural accent?

Jersey Interlude

"I WONDER what the water's like," I said bleakly.

The big man in the bowler hat gazed sombrely across the English Channel.

"You wouldn't get me into *that*," he said. "Not wild 'orses wouldn't."

"It only *looks* cold," said the small man in the cap. "When you got the tard comin' up over the 'ot sand, well, what I mean, stands to reason, don't it?"

The big man continued to regard the sea with distaste.

"It *is* cold," he said. "Marsswell stay 'omen freeze in the Serp."

"Look," said the small man wearily. "Tard goes aht abaht 'arf a mowl, see? Comes up over 'ot sand, wotta sun's bin sharnin' on orler blimmin' artnoon, see? Bahnd ter git 'ot, the water, innit?"

"Marsswell stay 'ome," said the big man moodily, "and catch your death in the Serp."

I could see no future in waiting for the small man's inevitable paroxysm of rage, and walked farther along the seawall. Addressing a small pride of natives I said: "Any idea what the water's like to-day?"

The natives removed their pipes and looked at the sea in the maddeningly omniscient way common to natives of anywhere near it.

"Might be fresh, first go under," one of them said. He replaced his pipe, and his colleagues did the same. Another said "Ah." (This is a difficult word to say wholeheartedly with a pipe in the mouth, but he did it.)

"Low tide," went on the spokesman, "she can be fresh, very fresh."

"At this time of year," added one of his friends. Another, evidently appreciative of true eloquence when he heard it, said, "Ah."

The spokesman removed his pipe again and studied it closely. Then, turning to me with the air of one relinquishing the secrets of the deep, he said: "But when she comes up over the hot sand she . . ."

I moved on. A large blond man was beating his chest.

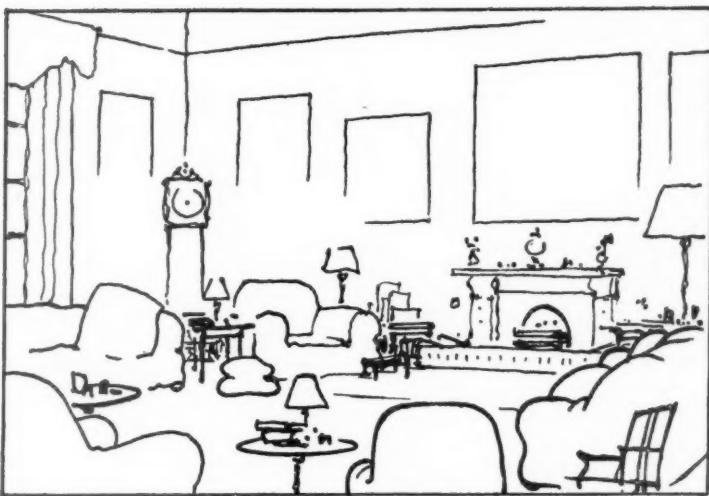
"Going in?" I asked him.

He shook my hand emotionally. For a moment he struggled for speech, then said: "Ven der vorter kom opp ofer der varm sens she is gettink hot." He shook hands with me again, uttered a Nordie cry and rushed into the water.

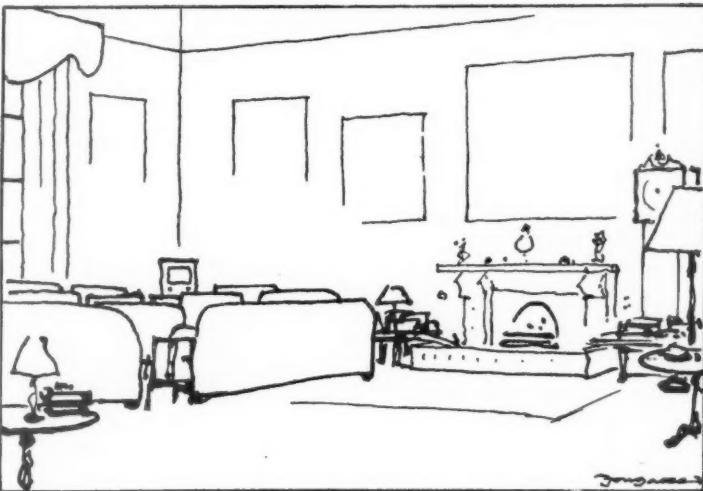
I bathed, slightly, and returned shivering to my friends. The big man

ANOTHER CHANGING FACE

DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE



The central pivot of a room used to be the fireplace . . .



Now, of course, it's the television set.

looked at my mauve face and laughed nastily.

"Caught your death, I shouldn't wonder," he said.

Bravely controlling my chattering teeth I said: "It's a bit fresh at low tide, but when the water comes up over the hot sand it . . ."

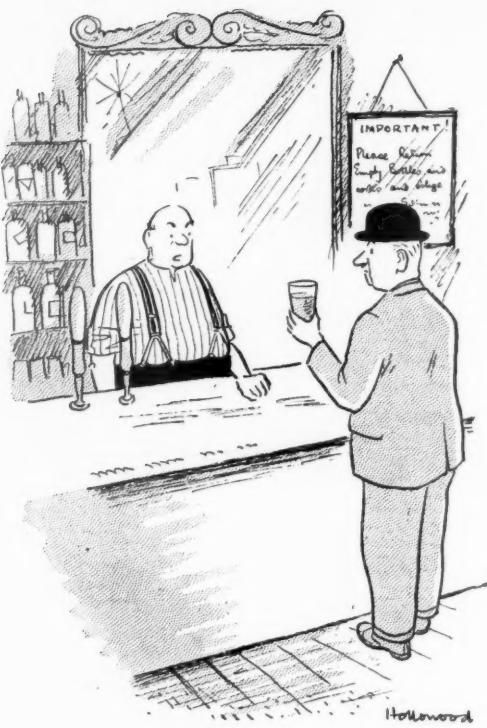
The small man gave a cry of triumph.

"Wot did I tell yer?" he exulted. The big man stared at the horizon. "Marsswell stay 'ome," he said.

○ ○

Rousing Cheers Department

" . . . Long live the unshakable brotherhood between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia."—Canadian paper's report of Tito's appeal to Stalin.



"First it's too weak for you, then it's radio-active."

The Sailing of the Ark

THE sky was low, the sounding rain was falling dense and dark,
And Noah's sons were standing at the window of the Ark.

The beasts were in, but Japhet said "I see one creature more..
Belated and unmated there comes knocking at the door."

"Well, let him knock or let him drown," said Ham, "or learn to swim;
We're overcrowded as it is, we've got no room for him."

"And yet it knocks, how terribly it knocks," said Shem.
"Its feet
Are hard as horns and O, the air that comes from it is sweet."

"Now hush!" said Ham. "You'll waken Dad, and once he comes to see
What's at the door it's sure to mean more work for you and me."

Noah's voice came roaring from the darkness down below:
"Some animal is knocking. Let it in before we go."

Ham shouted back (and savagely he nudged the other two)
"That's only Japhet knocking down a brad-nail in his shoe."

Said Noah "Boys, I hear a noise that's like a horse's hoof."
Said Ham "Why, that's the dreadful rain that drums upon the roof."

Noah tumbled up on deck and out he put his head.
His face grew white, his knees were loosed, he tore his beard and said

"Look, look! It would not wait. It turns away. It takes its flight—
Fine work you've made of it, my sons, between you all to-night!

O noble and unmated beast, my sons were all unkind;
In such a night what stable and what manger will you find?

O golden hoofs, O cataracts of mane, O nostrils wide
With high disdain, and O the neck wave-arched, the lovely pride!

O long shall be the furrows ploughed upon the hearts of men
Before it comes to stable and to manger once again,

And dark and crooked all the roads in which our race will walk,
And shrivelled all their manhood like a flower on broken stalk!

Now all the world, O Ham, may curse the hour that you were born—
Because of you the Ark must sail without the Unicorn."

N. W.

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H. J.'s Belles-Lettres

THIS Belle-Lettre is intended to engrave as in brass the memory of my dear old friend Carpenter-James.

As a child he was timid and anxious, ever fearing penury and the perils of retirement; in his prayers he always inserted a request for a private income, and any insurance company which advertised in his favourite comic was certain to be asked by him for its brochure. Apart from this, he was a typical boy, ink-stained, broken-kneed, tobacco-yellowed. Term after term his school reported "Normality: above the average," and his parents felt filled with an honest pride, as in a humdrum job well done. They did not expect him to set the Thames on fire, but in any case they were not a family to whom anything so showy and inconsiderate would have been likely to appeal. In due course he moved from school to hospital and from hospital to a large house with a brass plate; originally he wanted to specialize in surgery, but was driven into general practice by a poltergeist's getting into the theatre during his practical examination.

When I first knew him he was a well-conducted young medico with a loud laugh that was a tonic in cases of depression: other cases were taken by his partner, who had a lowland accent and a sympathetic purr. He was still cautious, yet capable of relaxation; to hear him joining in "Ah, Sweet Mystery of Life!" after a dinner of his Rugger club was warming to the innermost cockles of the heart. He was thus a not-ineligible bachelor when he met Nurse Poppy and her sister Mandragora and was immediately transfixed by love's harpoon. Now, Poppy was no "fast baby"; she was, in fact, the Temperance Toast of the Town, and before she would consent to wed she laid down



stringent conditions for the conduct of their love-nest, her ambition being that it should satisfy the highest standards of her sister, whom she greatly admired. This Mandragora had a heart of gold but was hell as a visitor, having gone to the good in the way that other people go to the bad. However, bemused by love, Carpenter-James agreed to every point and the couple signed on for the duration.

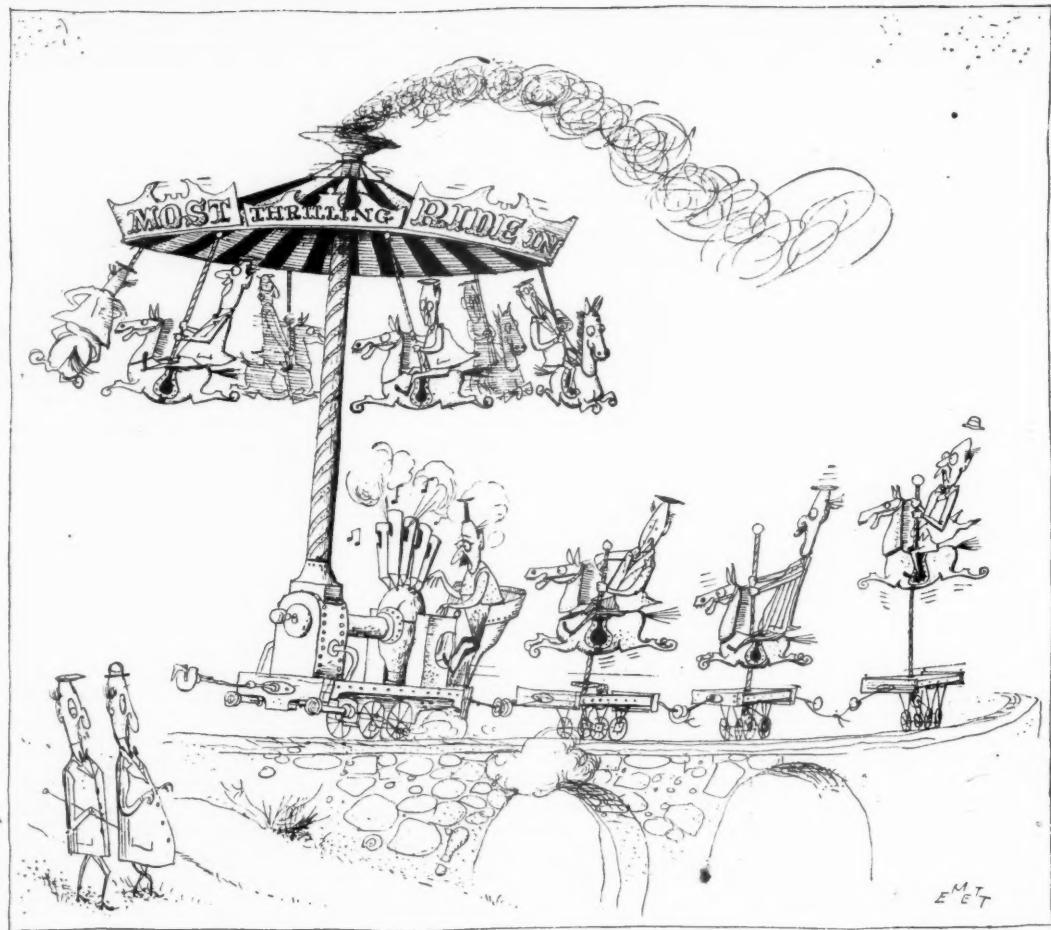
The next part of my memoir is rather painful. I try to avoid it. I vamp idly on my typewriter. Not being a very good typist, I tend to chords rather than arpeggios at the best of times, and now emotion at having to introduce the villain makes matters even worse. Morecambe Bey was of mixed origin and worse morals. He gloried in evil-doing and spent a large income on the overheads. One beautiful spring morn he was lying on his silken couch wearing cloth-of-gold pyjamas and smoking a joss-stick, when his spies—Messrs. Macintosh, Macwhirter and Macabre—reported to him the happy home-life of Carpenter and Poppy, which without batting an eyelid he determined to wreck. Pretending to have a fear of heights which forced him to live in a basement, he called on Carpenter professionally and soon turned the acquaintance into a friendship. Cunningly he introduced him into the world of haute cuisine. Amid the modernistic décor of the "Henry Moorish Tea-rooms" he discoursed of the rhum baba. At "Le Lapin Fragile," behind that alluring window inscribed "Plovers' Eggs as Mother Poaches Them," he told how a pinch of salt improves coffee, or read aloud Landor's *Imaginary Conversations* between Brillat-Savarin and Mrs. Beeton. When Carpenter-James returned from these gastronomic forays he would urge Poppy to serve the luscious menus with which his imagination was inflamed. Feeling more and more inadequate as she struggled to prevent her boiled potatoes from greying or her sprouts from unfolding, she grew depressed and one day fled for comfort to Mandragora, in whose company she found Morecambe Bey, ostensibly paying an afternoon call; but Morecambe Bey was never more dangerous than when ostensible.

Our villain was skilled in all the arts of the *roué*, as beffited a man who had drunk champagne from a slipper that had belonged to the Marquise de Brinvilliers, and he listened to Poppy's woes with self-congratulatory relish. Then, serpent-like, he offered to give her cooking lessons. "I will turn you into a veritable Schiaparelli of the kitchen," he said. "Now, mum's the word, and let's make it a real bumper surprise for hubby." Enthusiastically the poor butterfly entered the web. Day after day she studied in Morecambe Bey's luxurious library, until he suggested that her approaching wedding anniversary would be a fitting occasion to reveal her newly-acquired art. Feverishly she revised, but little did she know—it was basse, not haute, cuisine he had been teaching her.

When with blushing pride she placed the pineapple soup, the stewed herrings and the roly-poly with camembert sauce before her love, his soul was seared as if with rope-burns, and by the end of lunch he was, though moidered, well on the way to the conclusion that all was not well between them. Rising speechless from the table he tottered back to his practice. That afternoon his work was far from professional. Patients who had been in A.R.P. raised horrified eyebrows as his intended reef-knots turned into grannies; could this really be an M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., they began to wonder?

In desperation he came to ask my advice. "This," I told him, "is a query for the old ouija-board." We were lucky to have a built-in one, our landlord being great on amenities, and in a trice it was in operation. Unfortunately, we first got Sir Isaac Pitman, who wrote in shorthand, and then Samuel Roget, who wrote in synonyms, but finally we tapped Jonathan Wild, who promptly peached on Morecambe Bey. The news staggered my poor friend, but as he was seated at the time no serious harm was done. "What, man! ne'er pull your hat upon your brows," I said, "your stethoscope shows through"; but curtly thanking me for my help he shot off to the villain's lair where he devoted himself to bringing retribution to the home-wrecker. Never since Ulysses bent Penelope's beaux was such justice done. Leaving the trickster well bruised and thoroughly off his stroke, Carpenter-James returned light-foot to Poppy. Amid scenes of unbridled reconciliation he produced a tin of baked beans and a bunch of rhubarb as a peace-offering, and agreed that plain wholesome food was the cement of the British home.





"There you are, you see—a failing concern can always be revived with a spot of showmanship."

Ballade of Self-Preservation

THE gods sit on Olympus and let fly
With all the slings and arrows in their
kit.
They hold their sides; they very nearly die;
They laugh until you'd think they'd have a
fit;
And what of us? A man may serve a writ
Upon his neighbours for the bricks they chuck,
But for the target of celestial wit
The vital thing is knowing when to duck.

To circumvent the aim of those on high
Needs some agility, one must admit,
And even then . . . I say, I wonder why
The door's unlocked? I wish the lamps were lit.
They say the man who lives just opposite
Once grabbed the carving-knife and ran amuck.

It's just a rumour—nothing definite;
The vital thing is knowing when to duck.

Yet pluck up heart, my friends! We will defy
Alike the Madman and the Infinite.
What though the livid lightnings rend the sky,
And dark before us gapes the ghastly Pit;
Though bullets whistle round us as we sit,
And nations fall, and empires come unstuck,
Don't give up hope; we may get used to it:
The vital thing is knowing when to duck.

Envoi

I'm sorry, Prince—was that your head I hit?
And you on ninety-nine! What shocking luck!
It's true the ball got up a little bit—
The vital thing is knowing when to duck.



DREAM OF THE NEXT OLYMPIAD

"If it wasn't for this cold wind from the East . . ."

L'Homme de Mystère

ONE of the main pleasures of staying at an hotel, I think you will agree, lies in sorting out one's fellow guests, in sticking mental labels on the average-adjusters, the retired armadillo-breeders, the professors of etymology; in marking down the wife-beaters, the back-of-an-envelope poets, the men with a message. In France bogey for the course is naturally higher, owing to beards and local variations in the niceties of dress. We were doing fairly well at M. Tarragon's, all the same, having scored one overwhelming triumph in spotting a croupier on holiday simply from the way he barked "Faites vos choix!" at his family the moment they came in to dinner. Two new arrivals were under preliminary observation when M. Grosipiron entered our lives, with such momentum that immediately all other investigations were set aside.

I suppose you could say he just happened to be a human being of phenomenally high voltage. He wasn't very large, he wasn't really handsome except in an irregularly ugly fashion, but there was something about the man which seized and held attention. Partly it was his voice, which was like a cathedral organ being warmed up in bottom gear by a maestro, and partly the expression of supreme intelligence in his eyes, which were big, brown and melting. And partly, I nearly forgot to say, his hands. These were sinewy and stubby-fingered. He had a fine dome to his massive head, and a graceful sweep of curly silver hair. We put his age at about sixty.

"Look at the way he came into the restaurant," I remarked to my companion. "As if he'd owned it for so long that really he was tired of it."

"He knows everybody in the room is looking at him," she said, "but it doesn't worry him a bit. He just accepts it modestly as natural."

"First bets?"

"Musician, surgeon, artist, writer. I don't somehow think actor. Top of whichever tree it is."

"Might be a dramatist. Sartre, who knows."

"I'm sure Sartre would wear black corduroys and a brutally existentialist bow-tie. There's nothing *Huis-Clos*-ish about those tweeds. Old Jolyon wouldn't have said no to them."

You can tell a good deal by the way Hortense hands the menu to a new visitor. She is a big, muscular girl, but she comes from Finistère and is equipped with all manner of mystic radar. We were therefore interested to

note the lively respect with which she slipped the card in front of M. Grosipiron.

Now there are a great many ways of arriving at the simple but important decision of whether you will ring up the curtain with a bowl of picked shrimps or a slab of game *pâté*. The English plan, and personally I hold no brief for it, is to look coldly out of the window as if the very idea of nourishment was abhorrent, and murmur "Shrimps, I think. Well, no, *pâté*. Look here, I'll have whichever looks nicest." M. Grosipiron's method was more exact. First he appraised the menu as a whole, rather as if it had been the Sistine Madonna, while Hortense stood courteously at ease beside him. Then he sought confirmation from her that no cantaloup was in hiding round the corner. After that he made the closest possible inquiries, politely but very firmly, into the origins of as many creatures as had given their lives for the *pâté*; and at last, having turned the entire question over in his mind with a majestic gravity evidently greatly pleasing to Hortense, he plumped for shrimps. The problem of wine was dealt with on a higher level, M. Tarragon being summoned to make personal introductions to his finer vintages. In short, when twenty fascinating minutes had gone by it was decided to everybody's satisfaction precisely what this impressive M. Grosipiron was going to have for lunch.

His general behaviour continued quiet and non-committal, shedding no clues. Each morning he walked purposefully in the hills behind, each afternoon he sat on the terrace gazing, with an air of cosmic understanding, into the Seine. In the evenings he took a cigar a little farther up the river, before retiring to an early bed. He was always quite alone. My most discreet attempts to drag him into conversation were most charmingly rebuffed.

"Obviously a public figure," we said to M. Tarragon, who enjoys the game and never gives the answer until we ask for it, "accustomed to a front seat."

"You are assuredly warm," he replied. "A very prominent man."

"Probably some sort of artist."

"It is hard to believe otherwise, from all one hears."

Yet we never caught him reciting *Hamlet* in a corner, or dashing off a molten chapter, or even sketching on the table-cloth. The only time we found him reading it proved to be the obituary column in a newspaper which

he was studying with such masterful concentration. He baffled us, did M. Grosipiron.

One afternoon, as we sat watching him covertly—we had come to do little else—my companion shocked me with a theory as disturbing as it seemed blasphemous.

"I don't believe," she declared slowly, "there is anything at all behind that magnificent façade."

It was a terrible suggestion. Almost as she made it the man of mystery, moving with leonine confidence, left the terrace. And shortly afterwards M. Tarragon came out.

"Well," he said, "he's gone. What about it?"

"We give up."

Grinning wickedly, the old man fished out of his pocket a large visiting-card. It had a broad black band round it, and read:

CONSTANTIN GROSPIRON,
ENTREPRENEUR DE POMPES
FUNÈBRES."

ERIC.

Minute by Minute

To Establishments

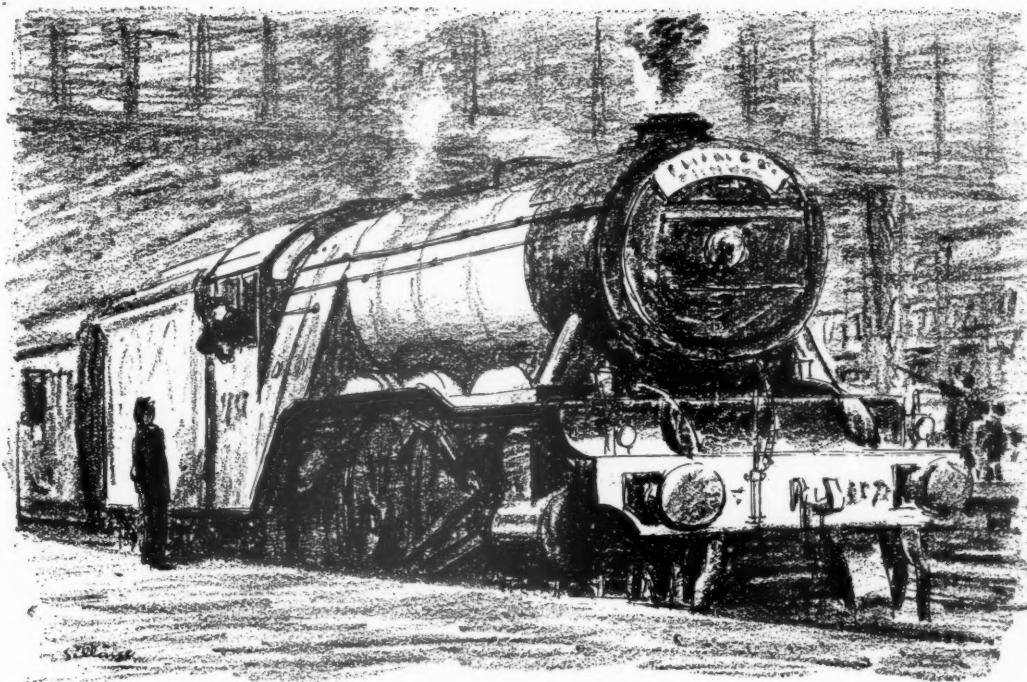
OUR examination of the methods of working in Registry has now concluded and the results will be forwarded in due course for your perusal. One immediate comment must, however, be made upon the apparent waste of man-power in the preparation of mid-morning and afternoon tea. Our officer reports that this operation involved the use of three (3) clerks of various grades and the loss of approx. one (1) hour's working time in both morning and afternoon. This would appear to be an unduly lengthy spell for the completion of the task in question, and I would suggest that the Head of Branch concerned be invited to tender his comments upon this aspect of my report.

D. T. DRIVER
(Methods and Organization).

To Registry

I have to refer to the recent report rendered by Methods and Organization upon the internal economy of your section and to state that it is alleged that some three clerks of various grades spend one hour each morning and afternoon in the preparation of tea. After due consideration it would appear that this loss of man-hours per diem is rather on the excessive side and your comments would be appreciated.

A. R. WILES
(Establishments).



"As a matter of fact, when I was a kid I always wanted to be a Civil Servant."

To Establishments

With reference to your minute regarding the time spent in the preparation of tea for consumption by the Registry staff I have instituted strict inquiries into the allegations enumerated by Methods and Organizations Branch and have the following facts to submit for your consideration:

Collecting tea money, procuring change, making list of sugar-takers and non-sugar-takers and listing the variety and quantity of cakes to be procured occupies one clerk (Grade III) for a period of twenty minutes.

Collecting cups, washing and preparing tea-pot with a charge of tea occupies one other clerk (Grade III) for a period of fifteen minutes, unless a queue is formed at the wash-basin.

Upon successful collection of all monies the first clerk then proceeds to fill the kettle with the correct amount of water and to place this receptacle upon the gas-stove adjacent to the head messenger's room. This duty discharged she then calls upon a clerk (Grade II), who proceeds to light the appropriate gas-burner and then to stand guard over the kettle. This latter duty is absolutely essential as the messengers have a habit of removing unguarded vessels and replacing with their own utensils. This duty involves

the clerk in a time loss of some thirty to forty minutes, as the gas supply is constantly at half pressure. Upon intimation that the vessel is in the act of boiling one of the aforesaid clerks prepares the tea and, upon arriving back at the Registry, pours the fluid into cups and hands to recipients. From an analysis of the above information I agree that approximately one (1) hour each morning and a similar period each afternoon is devoted to the preparation of tea in the Registry, but, from a perusal of the above facts, I sincerely trust that you will concur that the time is not, in fact, wasted.

C. LONGER

(Registry).

To Registry

With reference to your minute regarding the methods of supplying tea I have to inform you that my department has carefully considered your report and has come to the conclusion that the consumption of tea in such circumstances is an unjustified luxury, and, at a time when the utmost priority must be given to the saving of man-power, it is with reluctance that I must request you to discontinue the habit. Your co-operation in this matter will be appreciated.

A. R. WILES
(Establishments).

To Establishments

Your minute re the cessation of the preparation of tea in my section has just come to hand. I have noted your remarks, but, before promulgation of your instructions, I must inform you that the information in my previous minute is lacking in one detail. I have now to inform your department that the aforesaid members of my staff are, in fact, responsible for the daily supply of tea to your Branch. This factor should, therefore, be considered when a computation of man-hours per cup is undertaken.

C. LONGER

(Registry).

To Registry

Thank you for the additional information contained in your latest minute. Although these facts cannot influence my Branch's decision you will be glad to learn that my Branch has now been reconsidering the whole matter and I am to inform you that it has been decided that the abrupt cessation of reasonable refreshment would not be in the best interests of the staff and could not be justified by previous precedent. My preceding minutes can, in the circumstances, be annulled.

A. R. WILES
(Establishments).

Might Happen to Anyone.

WHEN my back tyre went *Pheesh!* at midnight on Wednesday I slewed the car neatly into the forecourt of a public-house called The Keys and Casket, slammed its door and left it, finding my way back to Twickenham by instinct and the inscriptions on pillar-box name-plates.

It took me three hours, and yet I slept badly; the crippled car lay beside my bed all night; in the morning its picture was printed on the bedroom wall, and later projected on the marmalade jar at breakfast, captioned "Go aisy with the jam."

In the City my morning correspondence seemed to read, "Your flat tyre to hand and duly noted," or, "Further to your puncture of even date . . ." Something had to be done. For one thing, it was the hottest July day for seventy years (remember?) and the sun still had my other tyres to go at.

For the information of those who continually tax me with the irresponsibility of a three- (sometimes two-) year-old child I should like to say that I had not only noted the name of the public-house, but that of the shop opposite—*Gents' H. GAGEMENT Hairdresser*—whose signwriter had thoughtfully written at the end of this sign, finding a dab of paint to spare, "Tel: 6957," and I had made a note of this too. I am no fool; I know that public-houses traditionally figure in the telephone directory under names like Bert Fugg and Joe Banger, and although this device may avoid three columns of Dukes of Wellington, it is no help to a man who wants to ask the landlord of The Keys and Casket to nip out and fix a flat. So it didn't surprise me to find that The Keys and Casket was not listed in the directory; what did was that Mr. Gagement wasn't listed either . . . I had realized by now, you see, that his signwriter hadn't had enough paint to include the exchange, and this made it awkward: having only the roughest geographical notion of the place where my tyre had chosen to go *Pheesh!* I manfully began to dial as many 6957s as I could think of between Tooting and Raynes Park.

By noon I had spoken to some dozen subscribers in west suburban areas, including a taxi-rank—the only one I have ever known to answer the telephone—and a lady who said shrilly "You are the limit, Duggie, you said you'd ring at the crack!" Then, at last, I found Mr. Gagement on a remote exchange, the kind where an interminable, uninhabited silence floods

suddenly into life after two sharp pips. At first I could hardly believe it, and kept seeking assurances that it was indeed he. In return he kept asking me who I was, and when, with a consciousness of anti-climax, I could only describe myself as a man who had been driving past his shop the night before, he said coldly, "Look, mate. Shave or haircut, that's the lot. Nothink fancy. Which is it to be?"

I pride myself on the way I put the delicate ease to him. He went, in time, and looked out of the window, coming back in a lighter frame of mind. He said that the car was there all right, that the tyre was flat all right, and that it was standing right slap bang in the sun all right. He also said, after some asides to clients, that Sam from Bittle's Motors happened to be in the shop, and would fix me up all right.

"All right," I said. "And I should like to thank—"

But Mr. Gagement had gone. I would have rung him back to clinch the thing if I hadn't forgotten his remote exchange. I would have rung up Bittle's Motors, too, only they weren't in the directory. No doubt they were listed under some hairdresser's or other.

After lunch I got to work on an itinerary that would land me somewhere in the region of The Keys and Casket, and at four o'clock I glided effortlessly (in a train of course) out of Waterloo station.

Owing to a lot of what the telephone-girls primly describe as mis-routing,

and a confusion about the points of the compass which led me to take a quantity of stifling fourpenny bus-rides along the same road but in alternating directions, it was some time before I spotted my car. It shimmered in the heat. The tyre was very slightly flatter than it had been the night before.

With uncanny luck I stumbled on Bittle's Motors round a couple of corners, and with unaccustomed confidence shouted "Anybody here called Sam?" "Yes," said a man with a small wrench in his mouth. He absently banged a headlamp with the wrench while I reminded him of the commission relayed to him through Mr. Gagement. "That's right," he admitted. "Aven't 'ad a chance, mate, that's the trouble." He raised his voice. "'Ave we, Charlie?" A man under a baker's van said "Have we what?"—and I cut in masterfully. I was feeling a giant that day.

"Lend me a jack," I said, turning up a cuff. What did it matter that it was 93 degrees at Kew? (In the New Malden, Raynes Park, Kingston district, or wherever I was, it was rather more: it just happens that they have no observatories there.)

The jack they lent me, with quite remarkable civility (the heat seemed to be affecting everything strangely), was a heavy, wheeled affair, suitable for jacking-up a small shunting-engine. As I dragged it through the streets of the suburb, making a noise like a runaway milk-float, I felt not embarrassed but proud and defiant. Residents threw admiring glances at my black jacket and pin-striped trousers. That day, who knows? I may have struck a blow for the white-collar man whose repercussions—

However. The jack was opening itself out, I noticed, and was soon an extended mechanism of arms, pawls and ratchets three perambulators long. I drew it after me like a train, and by the time I had reached the forecourt of The Keys and Casket there was hardly room for it; the children who had joined my caravan were obliged to take up their positions on the extreme edge of the pavement in order to learn how to jack up a car.

Then matters suddenly took a turn for the worse. The small cradle, on which a jack receives its load, had fallen off some twenty-three shops back; the children kindly went with me to fetch it. And the flat tyre was so splayed out on the asphalt that I couldn't get the jack under the axle,





"Right up our street, Bill—they don't keep a dog."

and had to wedge it under the rear spring, so that when I applied leverage the spring merely withdrew into the car's dark under-belly; the car itself continued to squat complacently. It was very hot.

Anxious to avoid a stage wait while laying further plans I decided to get the spare wheel ready. I took off the string and with foolish confidence let the wheel fall. It went *Whap!* not bouncing. It was very flat. The children commented on this. With my little hand-pump, which will inflate a baby's balloon almost to bursting point with eighty-eight good pushes, I pumped it up. Then I withdrew the jack and reintroduced it so as to exert pressure on the base of the petrol tank, which I know to be firmly rusted on. Slowly and creakingly rose the car.

I removed the punctured wheel. (Some incidents are too harrowing for detailed report; one of the little girls had to be led off, crying, at the sight of the blood.) I then manoeuvred the spare into place. Nearly into place. It wouldn't go. It was too fat. In

anguish I let out its precious wind (four hundred and seventy-seven pushes, the children had counted) but it still wouldn't go. Why? Because the car was sinking. So was the jack. So was I. The sun-softened asphalt was receiving the three of us into its bosom. Even as I watched, the tarry black ooze silently completed its envelopment of the jack's basic structure.

I was rooted to the ground, but literally. Any moment now I should be in up to the knees, the car would be awash, with tar and tiny pebbles surging implacably over the upholstery and into the jar of loganberries I had forgotten all about in the back. With the strength of despair I burst out of my shoes and sprang on to the running-board; I heard the jack go down with a faint squelch, and the car settled down by the stern another six inches under my weight. The laughter of the children had stopped now, and through the dancing heat-haze I could see that their little faces were white. A montage of headlines flashed on the screen of my mind: "Molten Tar Engulfs

Motorist" . . . "Children Watch Bizarre Tragedy on Hottest Day" . . . I wanted to cry out, but only a croak would come . . .

"Kingston," said a polite but insistent voice. "As far as we go."

I gave the conductress the wide gaze of one who has been caught asleep but still thinks he may convince otherwise. Leaving the depot's oily gloom I asked several people how to get to The Keys and Casket, but none of them knew. To-morrow I shall have to find Mr. Gagement's remote exchange again.

J. B. B.

• • •

A Move in the Right Direction

"At 10 a.m. the temperature at Bridlington was 680 degrees, 10 degrees cooler than at the same time yesterday."—*Yorks. paper.*

• • •
"WASTE FOOD"
Label on U.D.C. van.

These Government orders get more and more subtle . . .

THE last play to be added this season to the repertory at Stratford gives us a piece of acting of solid distinction, Mr. GODFREY TEARLE's *Othello*. The keynote of his performance is extreme naturalness, the polished ease which springs from technical mastery. Here to our satisfaction is a great captain and a great lover, to whom is added a great gentleman whose good manners are devoid of mannerism. It would be possible to say that these good manners detract a little from the passion of the later scenes, where the very fullest depths of tragedy go unplumbed; but I feel that in the face of acting of this quality such criticism would be niggling, and I am sure that as between a quiet Moor and one compounded of pyrotechnics, however cunningly fused, the quiet Moor wins. Mr. TEARLE's noble voice, majestic figure (superbly dressed by Miss AUDREY CRUDDAS) and absolute sincerity make an *Othello* to be remembered gratefully. Not black, but faintly dusky, a hue more generous to the fine play of facial expression.

Having looked forward to seeing Mr. ANTHONY QUAYLE's *Iago* again, which I liked very much in London last year, I was disappointed. The streak of yokelry, the suggestion of not quite making the social grade and of being defiantly conscious of it, are still there, and this variation on the polished villain of tradition remains interesting, but some of the fire seems to have gone out of the burning animal hatred for *Othello* which before made the conceit credible. It is all right for this *Iago* not to comprehend the extent of his own devilry, but it is all wrong for him to appear to be wallowing in wickedness just for fun.

Miss DIANA WYNYARD caps a rewarding season with a graceful and gracious *Desdemona* of character, in whose complete and selfless love there is nothing of weakness. Miss CRUDDAS has again provided lovely clothes. Miss ENA BURRILL's *Emilia*, surmounted by angelic curls, is first-rate, touchingly gentle with her mistress and with her master a raging wildebeast. *Roderigo's* futility is rarely made funny,

At the Play

Othello (STRATFORD)—*The Glass Menagerie* (HAYMARKET)
Jonathan (ALDWYCH)—*No Trees in the Street* (ST. JAMES'S)

but Mr. PAUL SCOTFIELD treats it with an anxiously dyspeptic voice that twists the simple lines into amusingly grotesque shapes. Mr. JOHN JUSTIN is a likeable *Cassio*, but for a camp-trollop Miss HEATHER STANNARD's *Bianca* is altogether too respectable.

There are no tricks about this production devised by Mr. TEARLE and staged by Mr. QUAYLE. It is

sentimental imagining. It springs from the Broadway Celtic school of gentle whimsy; in places charming, in one place briefly stirring, but the impression given by it as a whole is one of artificiality. That Mr. WILLIAMS can write is plain, but it remains to be seen if he can make a play about real people.

The *Wingfields* are unreal because although they live in an alley of St. Louis, which I take to be as populous a town as most, their insulation from life is almost as complete as if they inhabited an island on the moon. The mother, having come down in the world after a calamitous marriage with a high-spirited gentleman in telephones, drives her two children distracted with tinkling reminiscence and genteel dithering. The son is a sturdy young poet reluctantly trafficking in shoes for the support of his unlikely home, and the daughter is a timid cripple, whose existence revolves round a collection of glass animals. Refusing to face the girl's reputed lack of wits, her mother sees marriage as her salvation, and when her brother is persuaded to bring home a nice, rather stupid young man solemnly preparing himself for the ascent of big business we get a glimpse of tragedy in a good scene in which this go-getter brings *Laura* to life, before utterly crushing her with the admission that he is about to be married. Rounded on bitterly by his mother, the son then takes a leaf, so to speak, out of the telephone book and decamps. It

seems, I must say, a very natural thing to do.

More important than the play is the fact that Miss HELEN HAYES is in it, as the mother, a part which falls into a series of Ruth-Draperish sketches: eccentric American lady touting on telephone, ditto playing hostess in old-world manner, ditto harrying young with nostalgic rhapsodies. It hasn't therefore much cumulative force, but in these varied turns Miss HAYES displays a dazzling accomplishment in humour, pathos and polite malice. She is as delightful as we had hoped. Mr. PHIL BROWN is very good as the son, both in the play and when he comes



[The Glass Menagerie

THE MENAGERIE BREAKS LOOSE.
 Tom MR. PHIL BROWN
 Amanda Wingfield MISS HELEN HAYES
 Laura MISS FRANCES HEFLIN

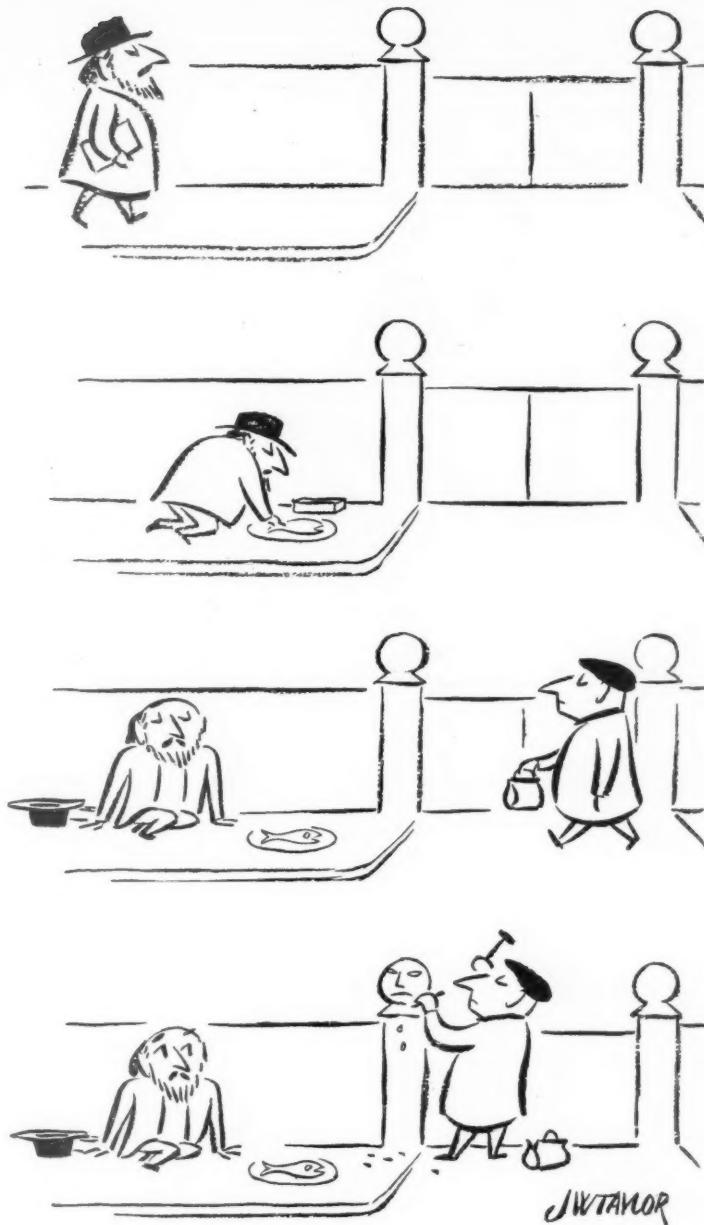
straightforward and sound, though the lighting could be better, some of the abrupt blackouts saving time only at the expense of illusion. Mr. JOSEPH CARL's scenery is lightly realistic, with a backcloth of Venice that made one half expect afterwards to be taken home up the Avon in a gondola.

The Glass Menagerie has come from America to the Haymarket on a great gale of acclamation, and it is difficult to understand why. Mr. TENNESSEE WILLIAMS may be the outstanding playwright New York declares him to be, but we shall require weightier proof of it than this patchwork bubble of

out of it, in the current American fashion, to throw a confidential bridge over time and space; but it is impossible to believe that so honest a youth would be so friendless. Mr. HUGH McDERMOTT gives a sympathetic illustration of pep-in-twenty-lessons, and handles delicately his fragile passages with *Laura*. As the latter Miss FRANCES HEFLIN seems physically too robust, but in the vast vacuum of shyness she is effective. The trouble with *Laura* is that although supposed to be numb in the head she behaves so much more sanely than her mother. There is nothing in the least numb about the way she deals with her brother's homecoming in liquor.

Mr. JOHN GIELGUD's production is as admirably smooth as one would expect, and I imagine that the liberal employment of gauze, which adds still further to the curious isolation of the *Wingfields*, is laid down in the author's directions. At the end the brother, looking back at his family from a distance with no marked regret, sees them through a giant meat-safe which descends visibly from the flies, making the mother and daughter appear like dim specimens in some pixyologist's elfarium.

A hasty re-reading of the prophet Samuel persuades me that in *Jonathan* at the Aldwych Mr. ALAN MELVILLE scarcely plays fair with us. For in this very outspoken account, in rather too bright modern idiom, of the David-Bathsheba scandal he makes *David* agonize over the death of *Bathsheba's* infant son with all the furious anxiety of a childless king; whereas I find that at this stage in his paternity he had no fewer than seventeen sons already on the books, a sufficient reserve, one would suppose, even in the most blood-strewn days of Israel. The theme, lightly and indeed ambiguously stated, seems to be that the memory of *Jonathan* hung like a spoiling shadow over *David's* connubial felicity. Crisp lines leap easily to Mr. MELVILLE's impudent pen, but the character of *David* is no more than scratched at. As light entertainment the play is in somewhat doubtful taste, while the serious note it assumes in the third act, when *David* and *Nathan* argue about the nature of divine revenge, follows strangely on the rest. As such a superficial *David* Mr. LEO GENN is not extended; he plays him impressively. Miss CORAL BROWNE's *Bathsheba* is quite amusingly presented in terms of the ladies photographed weekly on the shinier shooting-sticks; Mr. TORN THATCHER is very funny (for a bit) as *Uriah*, the hearty man-of-war



drunkenly on leave; and as the cynical, sociable old counsellor, *Ahitophel*, Mr. CECIL TROUNCER scoops the pool. A very witty performance, in the best-written part. The whole thing is nice to look at, thanks to Mr. ANTHONY HOLLAND.

MR. TED WILLIS's *No Trees in the Street* at the St. James's is a dull melodrama of spiv-crime got up to look like a play about the slums, which it

most certainly isn't. Miss BEATRIX LEHMANN rather over-acts a callous tigress of the tenements, and easily the best performance is that of Mr. ARTHUR LANE as a barrow-boy making bad in a big way. ERIC.

Ex-Government Speakers, 21/- each.
Notice in N. London radio store.
Another Labour-saving device?



"Excusez-moi, Madame—est ce qu'on parle Anglais ici?"

Our Booking Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Napoleon's Self-Portrait

Napoleon's Memoirs (FABER, 42/-), skilfully edited by Mr. SOMERSET DE CHAIR, presents for the first time in a lucid and coherent form the account of his career which Napoleon dictated piecemeal to his attendants on St. Helena. The two periods covered are from Corsica to Marengo, and the Hundred Days. Outside Napoleon's idolators—still, in spite of the last thirty years, a numerous body—no one in the least acquainted with the relations of Paoli and Napoleon will need to read more than the opening chapter, with its wholesale suppressions and distortions of the truth, to realize that Napoleon's sole object in these memoirs was to present himself to the world as a unique combination of virtue and genius. Liars are forgivable if they are amusing, bores are bearable if they are accurate; but this book has neither the charm of lively invention nor the value of an honest record. Even the easy magnanimity which allows a man who has played a great part in the world to praise his chief opponents was lacking to Napoleon. Genius and inspiration, he remarks, in reference to Nelson's victories, are necessary to the land general, but the marine general needs only experience; he has no field of battle to study, and his personal influence is confined to his own ship. Of the land generals opposed to him at Waterloo, Napoleon notes that Blucher violated the three great rules of war, and that Wellington owed his success to the fact that his bad choice of ground had made retreat impossible. H. K.

A Pillar of the Church

There was little of the conventional saint about William Temple, who would indeed look queer in a stained-glass window. But his Life and Letters (GEOFFREY CUMBERLEGE, O.U.P., 25/-) show how the boisterous laugh and the frank enjoyment of innocent pleasures went with a singlehearted devotion equal to that of the great saints; indeed, his journeys to preach the Gospel (often under the worst war-time conditions) were a real asceticism. Behind his popular utterances lay a deep and original Christian philosophy, which never forgot the practical needs of the Church and the world. He flourished at a time when a critical student population loved nothing so much as to "debunk" its elders and betters; and the better the betters, the greater the fun. Who could offer so good a target for their efforts as the dangerous modernist who was refused ordination, yet ended as an orthodox archbishop, the social rebel who ended as the mildest of "pinks"? Yet he was the one religious leader who could fill any hall or church in an academic city to overflowing; and a would-be debunker would certainly have ended the evening in the river (or latterly the static-water tank). The causes he championed may have done less than he hoped; yet if Christian sanity survives in the modern world, none will deserve a greater share of the credit than William Temple. Dr. IREMONGER has given a portrait which his friends will treasure; it will reveal the man and his secret to those who only heard him in the pulpit or on the wireless.

W. L. K.

"Punch in the Presence of the Passenger!"

It is entertaining to look back from any position, however modest, and see how you began to earn your living. The present reviewer, aged nine, was card-indexing a judge's library at the covetable salary of one penny per dozen cards. Mr. JOHN H. WINTERICH, managing editor of *The Saturday Review of Literature*, was earning a dollar a week—also out of school hours—as boy-of-all-work to a grocer. His job was typical of the openings vouchsafed by Providence (Rhode Island) in the early years of this century. In 1940 the American army inquired what positions Mr. WINTERICH had held, working backwards from *The Saturday Review*. He found the filling-in of this questionnaire so stimulating, that he wrote *Another Day, Another Dollar* (BENN, 9/6), to show how he began, on a hired bicycle, at the grocer's and wound up, on the day after he took his B.A., punching tickets on a trolley. He thoroughly enjoyed his bout of free enterprise; "and I certainly think it was freer and more enterprising in my boyhood." It is not every undergraduate who could so buoyantly pursue the acquisition of six dollars, one cent, by reading five hundred and one gas-meters; or every middle-aged editor who could renew his soaring youth with such happy results.

H. P. E.

Mr. Gerald Kersh's New Novel

Pym, the hero of *The Song of the Flea* (HEINEMANN, 12/6), is an almost completely destitute author and journalist, existing in a West Central apartment house owned by Busto, a rapacious and infinitely cunning old wretch whom Mr. GERALD KERSH portrays with great skill and relish. Busto was a connoisseur of poverty. He knew all the tricks of his hapless tenants. The sound of their footsteps told him when they were trying to escape with the rent unpaid, and there he was, whatever the hour, waiting at the bottom of the stairs. Pym, who cannot support even himself, desperately attempts to help a girl called Win ("There's

only been two men in my life, really"). She steals his typewriter, and just as he is recovering from this blow, he gets into another scrape, and finds himself responsible for providing an old woman with a decent funeral instead of the pauper's grave she had feared. In a mood of introspective self-disgust he accuses himself of being a pretentious sentimentalists, "a Quixote of the back streets, a sordid Quixote without the saving graces of courage and honesty." It is a pity that Mr. KERSH did not develop Pym's character along these lines. The conflict between his conception of himself as a knight-errant and his reluctance to live up to an exhausting and destructive ideal would have produced a convincing study. But Pym's courage and honesty wax instead of waning, and we leave him loved by a woman as honest and courageous as himself.

H. K.

Mohammed Rasul Allah

"Every great religion is a manifestation of God," said an Apostolic Delegate to China; "and to see it disappear is a grief to the soul." It is possibly because Islam, far from disappearing, numbers more practising adherents than Christianity, that it is hard for the Christian to do justice to its message and *The Messenger* (HALE, 15/-). No outstanding life of Mohammed has been written in English —its "documents" are largely tradition and the lives of its disciples. These have been Colonel R. V. C. BODLEY's chief sources. A friend of T. E. Lawrence, he spent seven years with the desert nomads, practising though not professing their religion and writing "Wind in the Sahara." The present biography, interesting as it is, would have been more shapely, more convincing and less open to reprisals had the author avoided controversial glances at the Christianity which Mohammed, he says, so nearly embraced. The strength of Islam lies in its defeat of idolatry; the simplicity of its doctrine; and the fact that, being designed for a nomadic existence, it depends wholly on the worshipper's personal devotion. Colonel BODLEY has done his best for his hero's domestic life. Yet the liveliest member of Mohammed's harem remarked, when a special revelation sanctioned an addition to its numbers, "the Lord makes haste to do your pleasure." And one feels that Gibbon's somewhat scurrilous irony will probably prove the last word on what, after all, is a side issue.

H. P. E.

A Winner from Canada

Written with a sureness of language and a sense of the significant in people denied to many authors of experience, *Hetty Dorval* (MACMILLAN, 6/-) is a first novel of unusual promise, by Miss ETHEL WILSON. Its story is simple, dramatic and moving. It is told in the first person by a Canadian girl over whom, when small and impressionable, a perfectly innocent spell is briefly thrown by a beautiful adventuress, the lady of the title. Parents can forbid friendship with such a woman, but they cannot alter the fate that later brings her back into the life of their daughter, now fully aware of the quicksands in Hetty's nature and armed to keep her at a distance. Only after a gruelling battle does she succeed. The descriptions of a happy childhood on a ranch near Vancouver, of a father and mother of character tenderly and humorously drawn, of the beauty of beloved scenery, these are charming; and from them spring portraits, firm and balanced in spite of being lightly sketched, of two women totally different, one shrewd and kind and sensitive, the other a bright flower of opportunist selfishness. Miss WILSON has the gift of saying a

great deal in little. There is poetry and vision in her book, too short really to be called a novel. A longer work from her is something to look forward to, and with confidence.

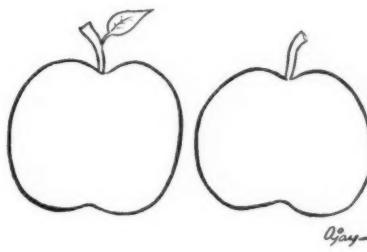
E. O. D. K.

There and Back Again

The first task described by Brigadier DUDLEY CLARKE, C.B., C.B.E., in his book *Seven Assignments* (CAPE, 12/6), is his exploration of the overland route from Mombasa to Cairo, in case the Mediterranean and Red Seas should be closed if Italy joined the war against us. The second was the carrying of last-minute orders to the North-West Expeditionary Force to Norway. In addition, the author carried £10,000 in notes from a paymaster plus eight mailbags of maps and secret pamphlets. He attached himself to the Force, and later returned, carrying "the fate of Norway" in the shape of appeal for British help. The third assignment was a return to Norway with detailed instructions for the complete evacuation of the Aandalsnes. Next came the added bitterness of having to tell Calais to stand fast. There followed a curious and still part-secret mission "to co-ordinate last-minute plans with a very important group in a neutral country." Then he was made Military Assistant to the new C.I.G.S., Sir John Dill, and had the idea that the Commandos of the Boer War might "be reborn in some form." The scheme was approved, he was told to "try to get a raid across the Channel mounted at the earliest possible moment," and the rest of the tale deals with the Commandos. That is the gist of the book and the story of what one man did in "a very peculiar war, which seemed intent on defying all the accepted canons of the Staff College." It leaves one wondering why fiction is read, and longing to memorize the wonderful heart-breaking, heart-lifting chapter describing a Tuesday night at the War Office when General Dill (whose son was on the beaches) and the Prime Minister talked over the telephone to General Gort on the beaches of La Panne during the evacuation from Dunkirk. If there is a "best war book" this one may be it.

B. E. B.

King George's Jubilee Trust last year sponsored an inquiry into the future scope and prospects of the Youth Service in the changed conditions of to-day. The results of this survey are presented in *The Outlook of Youth Work*, written by Mr. L. J. BARNES, Director of Social Training at Oxford University, and published by the Trust at 3/6. The report covers both the theoretical and the practical aspects of youth work and should be of great value to everyone engaged directly or indirectly in the service of young people.



"Are you coming under this new National Health Scheme?"



"Sylvia Roberts, unmarried, lives at home, likes films and good music."

Letters to the Secretary of a Golf Club

From Harry Cleek, Professional and Club-maker, Roughover Golf Club.

DEAR MR. WHELK,—I have just received one of the new mechanical caddies from the makers. These machines are all the rage in America and look like becoming popular over here, but as the purchase price of the model I have seems to be rather more than any of our members would stand for, would it be O.K. if I hired it out to them at, say, two bob a round?

I gave it a thorough test this morning on some of our rougher and more hilly terrain and found it surprisingly easy to handle; moreover, the wheels leave no impression on the greens. It may be seen in my shop any time you would care to call in.

Yours faithfully,
H. CLEEK.

From Lionel Nutmeg, Malayan Civil Service Retired, Captain, Roughover Golf Club. (By hand and Urgent.)

DEAR MR. SECRETARY,—What in the name of Fortune have you been allowing to run loose on the links to-day??!! Admiral Sneyring-Stymie

has just called round at my house to tell me that he had seen the new member leading an exotic animal down the eighteenth fairway on a leash. He said it was like an ant-eater—but not quite. Nobby Wilson apparently had had a long argument with the Admiral, maintaining it wasn't an animal at all but a self-operated cinema camera for taking personal "shorts" of a player in action. As both are notoriously myopic kindly let me have a full report immediately.

Yours sincerely,
L. NUTMEG.

P.S.—Commander Fugg telephoned a moment ago saying he is quite convinced he saw an Abyssinian Heron being dragged by the neck into the club-maker's shop this evening, but from the excited way he shouted at me I think he had been drinking.

From Angus McWhigg (Club Member), Glenfarg, Roughover.

DEAR WHELK,—I consider the new mechanical caddie is one of the finest inventions of modern times. (1) Costs ninepence less than a human caddie. (2) No tipping. (3) Absolutely docile

and will not answer you back. (4) Does not sniff or suck sweets while you are addressing your ball.

For goodness' sake get the club-maker to order some more. So far as I am concerned, it is just what I have been looking for for years.

Yours sincerely,
A. MCWHIGG.

From John Baggs, Caddie Master, Roughover Golf Club.

SIR,—I am in a rare sweat for unless you forbid that contraption on the links the caddies is to stage a stay-in strike. The latest dodge with it is for two members to share it—a golf-bag on each side! So S.O.S. and quick, sir, for we are sitting on a gunpowder plot.

Major Clark says it is the mechanization of the Lancashire Cotton Industry all over again and you know what happened then.

Yours truly, sir,
JOHN BAGGS.

From Edward Chloride, B.Sc., Assistant Science Master, St. Beowulf's, Roughover.

DEAR MR. WHELK,—I suppose the new mechanical caddie gadget has

been patented, if so let me know by whom. I have all sorts of new ideas for improving it—amongst others the following attachments: (a) Scrubbing-brush and Water-container for cleaning golf-balls. (b) Metal box (padded) for bottles of wallop, etc. (c) For Women only: Looking-glass and couple of hooks for powder-puff and hair-brush. A small slot could also be made in the tubular shaft for lipsticks.

It has just occurred to me the apparatus could be motorized.

Yours sincerely,
EDWARD CHLORIDE.

From General Sir Armstrong Forcursue,
K.B.E., C.S.I., The Cedars, Roughover.

DEAR SIR,—I have this very moment come in from a most devastating round of golf with the new member. He had

hired the mechanical caddie—and quite frankly I think it is the most unnerving, distracting and repulsive thing I have ever encountered on any course—so much so, and entirely through its agency, I was beaten 8 and 7.

From its squeaking wheels to its arrogant and phlegmatic bearing on both tee and green I reckon it to be worth at least 9 (say nine) strokes a round to any player so devoid of all principle and sportsmanship as to employ it.

You will therefore sit down without delay and write to the Rules of Golf Committee at St. Andrews insisting that they ban this foul innovation from all recognized golf courses on which our (until now unsullied) Royal and Ancient pastime is played.

Yours, sir,
ARMSTRONG FORCURSUE.

From John Baggs, Caddie Master,
Roughover Golf Club.

DEAR SIR,—I do not think we is to be bothered much more with the mechanical caddie—at least not for a bit. It ran away with the Revd. Cyril Brassie down the steep hill near the 4th green this evening and disappeared into the deep waters of the lake. Fortunately the Revd. B. had the presence of mind to let go just in time and being able to float was soon rescued by his opponent Mr. Viney.

Yours, sir, and much relieved,
JOHN BAGGS.

P.S.—Mr. Cleek has been trying to drag the lake for the past hour but can't touch bottom nor likely to.

P.S.2—Alf Humpitt (Senior Caddie) says the machine and his Reverence went down the hill quicker than the Gadarene Swine!

G. C. N.

Fiction

THE untimely end of Myphoot Curdle, perhaps the greatest writer of thrillers since Edgar Wallace, has cast a gloom over the millions of readers to whom his ghastly crimes were the only cheerful things in the drab post-war world. He was found stiff and cold on the floor of his book-lined study, and except that no curiously-wrought dagger protruded from his heart might have been mistaken for First Body in one of his own novels. At the subsequent inquest the coroner, to everybody's chagrin, brought in a verdict of death from natural causes, the doctors being unanimous that the deceased was a victim of apoplexy.

The chief witness was Miss Hirsute Prune, who stated that for forty years she had been acting as confidential secretary to the deceased, during which time she had typed rather more than twenty million words of Myphoot Curdle's novels, in which were described in revolting detail no fewer than 1,217 murders. Asked by the coroner if this long-sustained blood-bath had adversely affected her health, Miss Prune said that murders were like olives, you got used to them. She admitted that when she first went to Mr. Curdle she had been nervous of opening cupboards for fear that dead Chinamen would fall out, and that as she lay in bed at night she half-expected to see blood seep through the ceiling, but this phase soon passed and for many years she had been able to take the work in her stride.

"Was Mr. Curdle engaged on a new book at the time of his death?" the coroner next asked.

"He was," said Miss Prune, "and we both thought it was the best thing he had done. Instead of having seven corpses and only one murderer, which had been his recent average, he had hit upon the splendid notion of having seven murderers and only one corpse."

"A grand idea," said the coroner enthusiastically, "and we must all regret very much that he did not live to complete what would have been, I am sure, one of his noblest works."

"Actually," said Miss Prune, "he had really completed the book several months before his death, and his publishers were delighted with it. Unfortunately, a few days after they accepted it the House of Commons gave a Second Reading to a Bill which included a clause abolishing capital punishment, and so the publishers returned the book to Mr. Curdle for revision. On page 43, for instance, the masked intruder gripped Sir Jasper by the throat and said 'I'll throttle you, you cur, if I have to swing for it.' As the publishers pointed out, this would have to be altered to 'I'll throttle you, you cur, if I have to do twenty years or even more for it.' Mr. Curdle made the necessary alterations, which were very extensive, as most of his murderers had given vent to similar old-fashioned remarks. The book then went back to the publishers. A few days later the publishers returned it once more,

saying that, as the Lords had refused to acquiesce in the abolition of hanging, the position was now obscure, and so the murderers' conversation must be again revised. Mr. Curdle did his best, but it was difficult and the dialogue lacked a good deal of its old snap. The remark on page 43 became, for example, 'I'll throttle you, you cur, if I have to swing for it, supposing the Lords win, or spend a long time in gaol, if the Commons gain the verdict.'"

"This naturally preyed on Mr. Curdle's mind?" suggested the coroner.

"It nearly drove him off his head," said Miss Prune. "And when the Government then invented the compromise clause by which some of his seven murderers would be hanged and others not hanged he had to go all through the book again making some of them say they would swing for it and others that they would not swing for it. He set his teeth grimly, however, and completed the task on the evening before his death. When I left him at 11.30 P.M. he was wan but cheerful. Next morning I found him dead, with *The Times* clutched in his hand and his eyes fixed in a glassy stare on a paragraph saying that as the Lords had rejected the compromise clause it was likely that the Government would leave the whole matter in abeyance. Like all authors, he had a tendency to apoplexy, and the thought of having to re-write page 43 yet again undoubtedly brought on the fatal fit."

D. H. B.

Laft Night's Firft Night

LAFT Night at the Globe Playhouse we were present'd with a Revival of Master Will Shakespeare's Play "Hamlet."

The Acting was of the Standard we have come to expect of the Globe—that is, neither Very Good nor Very Bad but inclin'd to be Over Dramatic—and both the Leading Man and the Leading Boy acquitt'd Themselvess Well.

It is, therefore, by the Play itself that we must decide if this is a more Enjoyable Night than can be spent at Burbage's. Here, let me be frank, I was groffly Disappoint'd. I found, on my first Acquaintance with the Play, that Hamlet is not Original or Well Written. I, personally, am tired of Psychological Thrillers and Split-Personalities, and in this Play (Described in the Publicity Blurb as Shakespeare's Greatest Tragedy—singularly apt in my Opinion) we have a Surfeit of them.

Briefly the Story is This:—

Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, is fufpicious because his Father has Died. So would I be fufpicious with that Old Hag for a Mother. (What has happen'd to Master Abchurch, the Make-Up Man?) This Hag very soon marries Hamlet's Uncle Claudius. (Why choose such finifter Names, Master Will? We can spot the Villain so easily, alfo it's not very Danith is it?) Claudius thus becomes King.

Two Stooges who don't seem to have much to do come in and tell Hamlet that they have seen his Father's Ghofit on the Castle Battlements. Hamlet

goes to meet him and he spills the Beans about Claudius. At least we don't know for sure that he does but we think so. (Possibly Master Will had not quite made up his own mind at the Time.) The laft we hear of the Ghofit is his Voice bellowing "Swear! Swear!" This is accomplish'd by Claudius shouting down a piece of Drain-Pipe, Off-Stage. (I saw this little Artifice by Courtesy of a Hole in Master Diggory's Decor which left much to be Desir'd.)

Later an Amateurish Bunch of Players perform'd a Play because, we are told in one of Master Will's irritating little Rhyming Couplets,

" . . . The Play's the Thing.
Wherein I'll catch the Conscience of
the King."

It is my Firm Conviction that these Strolling Players are brought in to show the Audience at the Globe that it is possible to witness even worse Actors than the Resident Company.

Throughout the Gloom and Boredom of this Sombre Play we have some Comic Relief in the shape of Polonius, the Lord Chamberlain. This hamfested old Buffoon is Spear'd in the Third Act for no better Reason than that he Doubles for the First Gravedigger in Act Five and he has to have time to change his Costume.

Meanwhile Ophelia, a rather Wifhy-Wafhy Young Woman, who can't take No for an Answer and who has been flinging herself at our Hamlet, now flings herself into a Stream instead. For this I was greatly Reliev'd as she

had been causing Considerable Annoyance, Wandering on to the Stage and Singing Distracting Songs in the Middle of the Dialogue.

Hamlet, Banish'd but Back Again in time for Act Five, Enlivens Ophelia's otherwife dull Funeral by ferapping with Laertes, the Corpse's Brother.

As soon as Master Diggory was able to set the Scene we were Transport'd to the Conclusion of the Play, and here, I must say, Master Will makes up for a great deal of the Tedium of the Previous Action.

A Duel takes place, Primarily between Laertes and Hamlet, but the King and Queen as well as Half the Mammoth Cast join in with Venom'd Rapier and Poifon'd Wine and anything else Lethal that they can lay their Hands on. To our Delight the Old Hag of a Queen and Sinister Claudius Die, we shed a mild Tear as Laertes follows suit and we are dismayed to see that Hamlet has also Expir'd. However, he Revives sufficiently to Explain that he is indeed Dying and to give the Cue "The Reft is Silence." On Hearing these Words an Afs call'd Fortinbras bursts in upon the Scene and superintends the Removal of the Masses of Corpse.

Master Will Shakespeare, this Play is not Worthy of a London Playhouse. Its Hackney'd Theme and Unscientific Psychological Non-sense condemn it to a short run and an Unmourn'd Death. Oh, for the Days when Actors were Actors and a Play was something worth Travelling any Distance to see!



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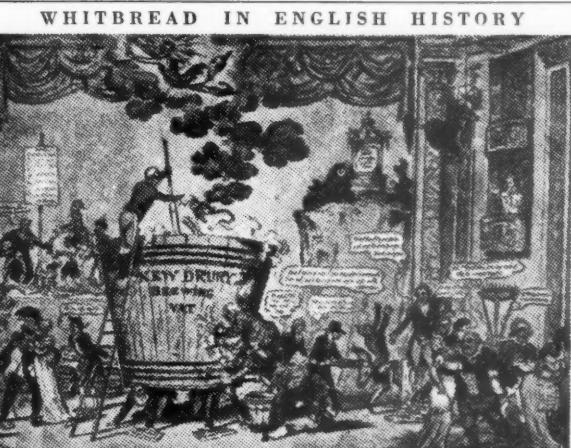
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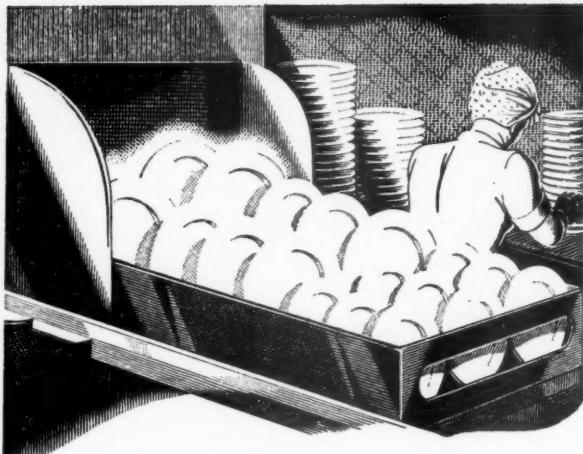
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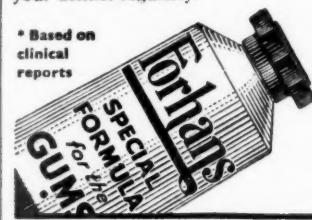
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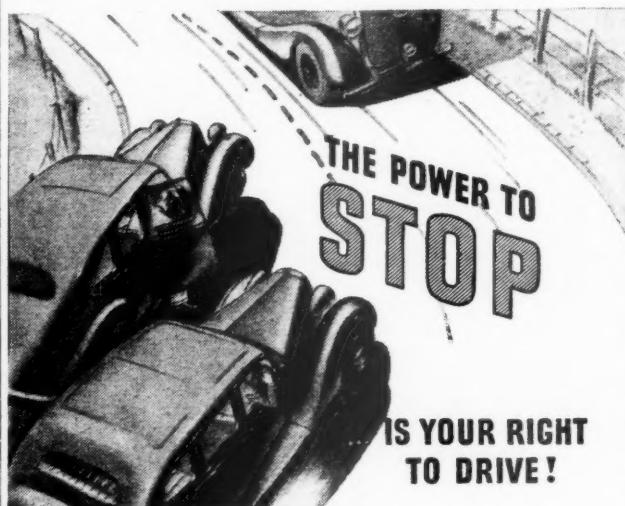
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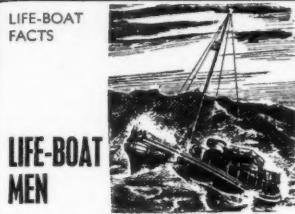


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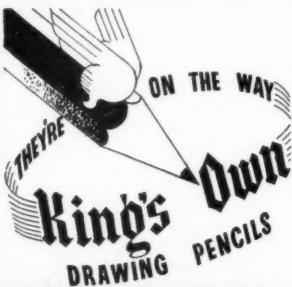
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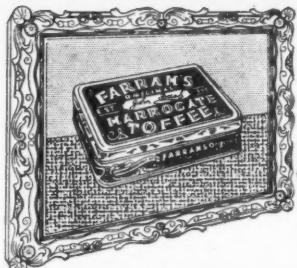
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